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1920

JOHN JORDAN DOUGLASS



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The
Bells



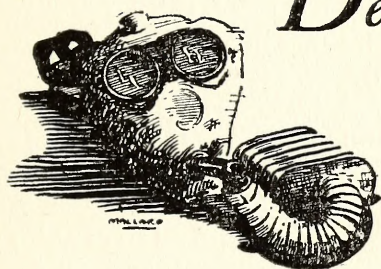
By JOHN JORDAN DOUGLASS

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Illustrated by
LIEUT. JOHN B. MALLARD

NC
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D7376
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Dedication:

*To those who fought
and those who fell
to make the world
safe for democracy.*

Third Printing

TO AN AUTUMN ROSE

(My Babe)

Fair rose that bloomed but two brief days,
So perfect and so pure;
Still with me here thy fragrance stays
Like heaven's magic lure.

Whene'er the changing seasons call
Thy face shall e'er return;
And memory's tears shall softly fall
In autumn's golden urn.





WINTER

WINTER



Alas, white winter, matron of the marble brow
The chill, imperious beauty of thy face—
Ah, how it palls me now!
Perfect as death in all its frozen grace.

Thou art the fate, the queen goddess of the four;
They bend before thee like a wind-swept reed.
'Neath thy cold smile the dull fields see no more
Midsummer's passion flowers bloom and bleed.

And yet I love thee for thy stainless truth;
The rigid cleanness of thy ordered rule.
Thou art the wisdom of the year's mad youth—
The season's sterner school.



WINTER



White, white as any sheeted ghost, you crept
Where all the wood beneath its white robe slept;
And well I knew that you had kept
The truce of Death.

Along the road where lay the tears of rain
I saw your footprints. In a rustic lane
I sought for Summer, but my quest was vain,
Wraith of the wintry breath.

You hung your bells of silver on the hedge;
Your frost lace glittered in the golden sedge;
Your breath was like a woodman's wedge
Beneath the Norther's blow.

You decked the trees with drapery of white;
Your cold moons raced with clouds the long, long night
Till morn was blooming like a rose of light.
Wraith of the snow.

Bells of Liberty

LIBERTY BELL



Ring it again to the ends of the earth,
From the mountain heights to the sea
In the land where freedom had its birth,
Where manhood still is the highest worth
In the hearts of the noble free!

Ring it again as it rang of yore—
The clarion call of the flag—
To rally the free from shore to shore,
To the roll of the drum and the cannon's roar
From the sea to the mountain crag!

Ring it again, the grand old bell,
Whose tongue once thrilled the world.
Aye, peal it forth like the ocean's swell—
The traitor's doom and the tyrant's knell
—Till the last black flag is furled.

TO THE WEARERS OF THE ROUGE
BOUQUET

I sing of the men who left the farm—
Of the sunburnt men and tall;
Of the men whom peace could never charm—
When they heard their country's call;
Of the men who vowed
By the strength allowed
That the flag should never fall.

I sing of the men from the roaring mill
Who left the whirling wheels,
Of the men who marched with a royal will
When death dogged at their heels;
Of the men whose dreams
Were the flag's bright gleams
When they slept on the scarlet hill.

I sing of the godly men who preach;
Of the men who did not pause;
Who never felt beyond the reach
Of draft or unwrit laws;
Of the men whose blood
Has hued each flood
Where hell gaped wide its jaws.

I sing of the stainless souls in white,
Who followed the great Red Cross
Whose smile was the bloom of a rose of light
All gold without the dross;
Of the angels there
With the thorn crowned hair
To lessen the battle loss.

I sing of the men from the banks and the law
Who closed their books to go;
Of the men who went where'er they saw
Their country's colors flow;
Who gave their blood
For the common good,
And their women as white as snow.

I sing of the men of the healing art,
Who went to the front to serve;
Of the men with the shepherds' tender heart
And the surgeon's iron nerve;
Of the men who heal
For the common weal
Nor ever shrink or swerve.

Aye we'll sing of these till the trump of time
Shall sound on land and sea;
Of the heroes robed in a light sublime
In the march of history;
Who gave their might
To the cause of right
In the name of Liberty!

LAD O' MY HEART



Lad o' my heart, I love you so
That when they tell me you must go,
Where the trumpets call and the bugles blow,
Ah, the summer of hope is a cold, cold snow—
Lad, o' Lad o' my heart,
Lad o' my heart.

Lad o' my heart, will you ever come back?
Will you follow the old, loved homeward track?
Or will you fall when the rifles crack
In the roaring hell of the fierce attack?
Lad o' my heart,
Lad o' my heart.

Lad o' my heart, if you never come home,
If they bury you deep 'neath the cold wet loam,
On the long, grim trail where the armies roam,
I'll drink to your love in the heart's red foam—
Lad o' my heart,
Lad o' my heart.



TO LA BELLE FRANCE



Viva la France—la Belle France;
France of the scarlet fields—
With Joan of Arc as a shining mark
For the France that never yields.

Vive la France—la Belle France
France of the Fleur de Lis—
And Lafayette, brave spirit, yet
To thrill to victory!

Vive la France—la Belle France;
France with her "croix de guerre."
For Christ is there with the thorns in His hair,
And the grief of God in a tear!

THE NEW COLUMBUS

(To Commander Reade and the Crew of the NC-4)



Knights of the air who crossed the baffled seas
To fling the Stars and Stripes to every breeze;
The victory's won; yours are the magic keys;
Above the clouds that screen the tossing deep
Science her star-loft vision yet shall keep.

Fit were it ye should cross those heaving seas
Which owned the mastery of the great Genoese,
Who strong and dauntless, sought the new Indies:
Intrepid pilots of the air-sea lane.
Bearing the new world's message to old Spain.

Up, far beyond the barriers of the night,
Where swam the stars in silvery spheres of light;
The white gull glimpsed the ship, and it was lost
Amid aerial waves, mocking the nether ships by tempests
tossed—

A flash of wings against the sky embossed:
The world salutes you: well indeed it may—
The dauntless dreamers of a mightier day!



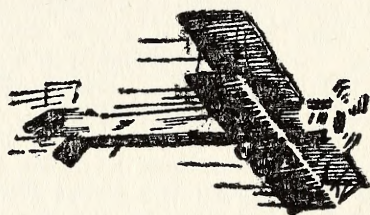
TO ONE IN FRANCE



O heart, o' mine, I drink to thee,
For thou art strong and fair and free:
I drink, O heart, the wine of smiles
Across the blue Atlantic miles,
O, heart o' mine!

O heart o' mine, I will not weep;
But love shall never die, nor sleep;
And though I drink the wine of tears
I'll keep thy tryst through all the years,
O, heart o' mine!

O heart o' mine, I still can hope;
Through all the dark my faith will grope
Until the dawn—Good night, sweet love—
All's well—God rules above.
O, heart o' mine!



THE FOLLOWERS OF THE FLAG



Across the sea you bore the flag;
Across the sea you brought it back;
Ne'er did its shining stars e'er drag
—From sea to sea; from crag to crag—
Along war's grim and gory track.

Home at last some heroes come,
And others watch with wistful eyes;
While others sleep where rolls no drum,
Where war's wild thrilling fifes are dumb;
In France blood-red with sacrifice.

Some stripes are deeper in the red;
Some stars shine golden in the blue;
Say not the fallen brave are dead,
But rather let it still be said
They live the best who died so true.

AT VERDUN THE FIRST

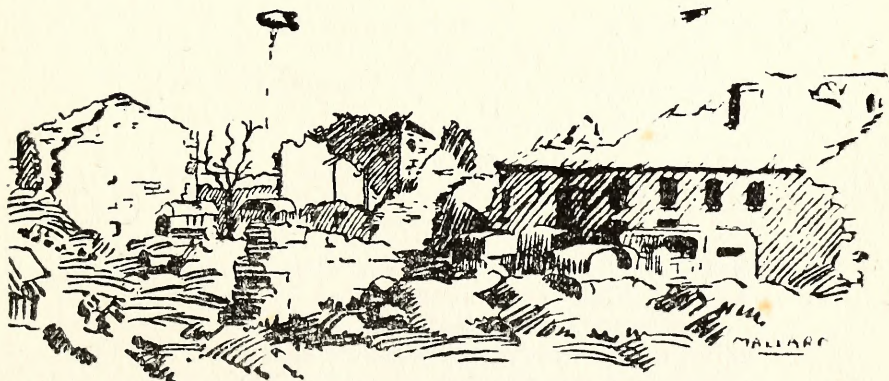


Midnight hung lurid o'er the sodden field,
Wide-winged and watchful like a brooding bird;
There, grim as Death, the foemen ne'er would yield—
Ten thousand hearts throbbed, muffled drums unheard.

Death was the reaper, and the windrows lay,
Heaped high against the murk of sullen skies;
Prone on their arms, they waited for the day,
As the gaunt tiger waits with gleaming eyes.

The day rose sultry from the saffron east,
A roar of guns broke on the weird, wan scene;
Low-winged, a vulture circled to the feast,
His eye undimmed, his hunger fierce and keen.

On, on they staggered, Frank and Teuton horde;
Grim Briton, Celt and Muscovite
From every gun a molten hell was poured,
Till day dripped red into the bowl of night.



HEROINES AT HOME

(To the women of the Wadesboro chapter of the Red Cross)

Oh you who went when death drew nigh,
Nor thought of self when sickness sped
Like a swift arrow through the sky—
And watched by some child's feverish bed.

I fain would write a garland rare
To place upon each noble name,
But well I know you do not care
For flowers of fame.

You went with Him of Galilee
Whose scarlet cross e'er leads
When pain and sorrow still must be,
And where the sad heart bleeds.

Not gold or gems could tempt you there I know
To pass that awful shadow at the door;
Where leads the crimson cross you go;
The "greater love"—I've seen it here once more.



LES IMMORTELLES



The war drums rolled while we were wed,
And soon, the bugle call.
In France the poppies bloomed blood red
Ere winter followed fall.

The war is over—will he come
Back to me as he said.
What means that slow and muffled drum?
Hush—he is dead.

The war is over. My love sleeps
Where rest in France the fallen brave;
My heart its ceaseless vigil keeps
Beside his grave.

And yet he lives in every stripe,
And smiles in every star—
Mine own beloved of martyr's type—
Where floats the flag afar.

THE GARDEN OF LIBERTY



I. THE RED ROSE

The morn awoke amid a garden fair
Where slept the night with diamonds in her hair,
He praised her jewels, but he chose
To give the light a red, red rose;
A rose of rubies, from a deathless vine,
Full blown and sweet as Omar's lyric wine.

A rose of love, too rich with life to die—
The crystaled spirit of an angel's cry;
A rose ne'er plucked by robbers' brave and bold;
A rose ne'er bought by miser's hoarded gold;
Its scarlet hue the spirit of the slain,
Its petals wet with Freedom's crimson rain.

She kissed the Red Rose; wore it in her breast;
It was the token that he loved her best!

II. THE WHITE ROSE

He paused beside a rose of ermine white,
Bathed in the beauty of eternal light;
A rose that e'en the Lily might not shame.
He gave it her in Freedom's holy name.
Ah, it was fair as Ariadne's brow,
And with it he her beauty did endow,
Pure as an infant dream of Heaven, it lay
Beside the altar where she paused to pray.

It withered not 'neath Winter's wasting breath;
It was a rose too wonderful for death!
She kissed the White Rose; hid it in her soul.
It was the token of his honor's stainless scroll.

III. THE BLUE VIOLET

He came once more to give her something new,
A simple token different from the Rose;
He gazed into the violet's eyes of blue,
When waking wolds had left their gown of snows
To don the green beneath the blue bird's note,
Ere yet the gray thrush tuned her golden throat
Within the orchards bursting to the bloom,
Or Spring had hushed the Winter's wailing loom.

She kissed the Blue Violet; kept it before her eyes;
It was the token that his honor never dies!

L'envoi:

Red Rose, it was his heart of love he gave;
White Rose, it was his soul e'er pure and brave;
Blue Violet, gift of the earth, type of the sky and sea—
She was Columbia, he Democracy!
Red, White and Blue—the colors of our flag,
Ne'er lowered on sea or misty mountain crag.



WATERLOO AT NIGHT



Hark ye, 'tis Waterloo again;
The field is wet with scarlet rain;
A pale moon, like a torch, lights up the dead.
The long, long ranks, low as the autumn leaves, and red.

Mark ye, where yon wan trooper, staggers to his feet;
A wounded bugler blows his last retreat;
Heaped high, the grenadiers will charge no more;
At sundown, I saw a vulture keep the grim red score.

I saw Napoleon's phantom army in the air;
The Conqueror, wild-eyed, with disheveled hair,
Stood aghast, like one afright,
Gazing out upon the silent, sword-mown ranks at night.

Somehow I seemed to glimpse his Marshal, Ney,
Who led the charging cavalcade that other day;
He, too, white shadowed, seemed to see with awe
A newer Waterloo, bloodier than his hardened eyes e'er saw.

I saw the sunken roadway, called O'Haine
Flowing like Niagara with the slain;
The blood of nations mingled in one stream.
I turned away. "Would God," I said, "It were a dream."

THE MEN WITH THE MARTYR'S MARK

(To Those Who Have Fallen in France.)



To the heroes who fell in the hail of hell,
I tune my rhythmic lyre,
But the world-wide notes of the Liberty Bell,
Like the deep-toned surge of the ocean's swell,
Ring out in living fire:

O martyrs, you have not died in vain,
In the windrowed heaps of the scarlet slain;
And this is the reason why:
Our tears are the dew and your blood is the rain,
Lest the flower of faith should die.

And I drink to the men who march no more
To the call of the drum and the fife,
Who sail the seas with the soundless shore,
Far out from the harbor of life.

But you march in the ranks of La Fayette,
And the stainless Maid of Arc,
When the morn with the wine of dew is wet,
And the stars burn red through the dark.

We shall not forget, though you come no more,
When the twilight turns to the dark;
But your shadow falls for aye at the door
Where it fell so oft in the days of yore—
O men with the martyr's mark!

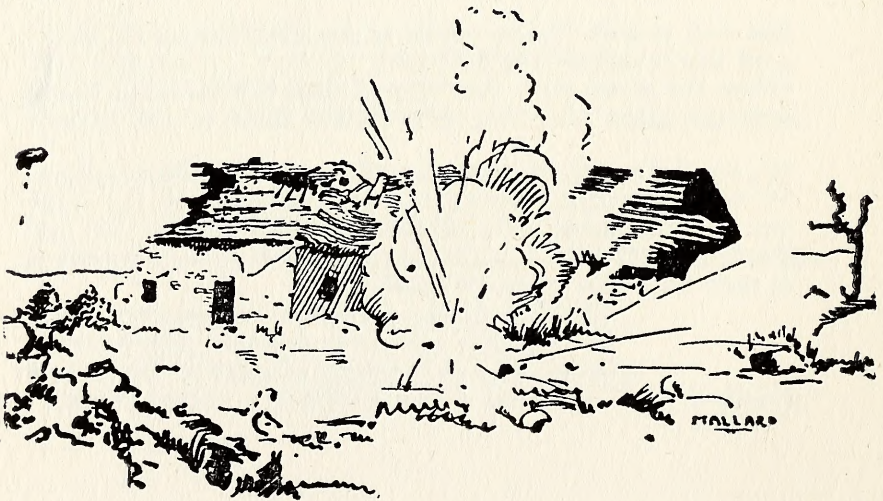
TO THE CAROLINIANS WHO HAVE FALLEN IN FRANCE

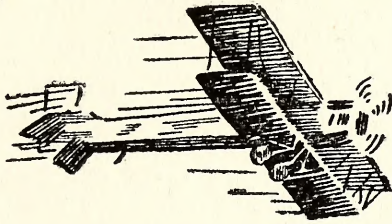


You fell in the front of the fighting line,
In the fore of the raging fray,
Where the cannons crash and the bullets whine,
And the field was red as new-pressed wine;
And you sleep in France today.

You fell in freedom's holy name,
In the dawn of the world's new day;
And you wrote in blood your scroll of fame;
Mid shriek and shell and hell's red flame,
You walked your scarlet way.

But, brother, you've not died in vain,
For you'll live till the end of time;
Your record shines without a stain,
The soul of faith marches on unslain,
To the heights of the hills sublime.





AN ODE TO PEACE



O thou White Angel from unclouded skies,
With hope's bright beacon shining in thine eyes,
Thy gracious smile rests on the golden fields,
And every rose thy fragrant incense yields.

Thy presence gladdens like the freshening rain
The blackened fields where withering War hath lain;
Thou art the Vestal Virgin of the years,
Calming our passions, drying all our tears.

Spread thy white wings o'er every field of blood,
Thy smile the sign of world-wide brotherhood;
O Beauteous Angel, guerdon of the right,
Roll back the curtain of the Nations' night!

Lead thou the people into paths of Peace,
Where War's wild clamors and its thunders cease;
Lest in our gloom we grope and may not see
The blood of God upon old Calvary.

TO THE MOTHERS OF THE BOYS IN FRANCE



Dear Hearts, so loyal, brave and true,
Ah, how my heart goes out to you;
And yet, Dear Hearts, I ne'er can know
The pangs with which you saw him go;
And yet you would not have him stay;
A mother's heart must be that way.

The night will never fall so dark
But that your heart will, too, embark
Across the wide, wide sea;
For where he is your heart will be;
And yet you would not have him here;
(There is an ocean in a tear!)

Long years are crystallised in a sigh.
Like homing birds fond memories fly
Back to old days when love caressed;
Against Time's glass the face is pressed
Like one who watches at a pane:
"Dear God, return him safe again."

But, Lord, I would not have him come
If 'slaving Huns should beat the drum.
Bury my heart with him in France
Where Freedom lifts her shining lance;
Like actors we must leave the scene,
But we shall leave our record clean!

They will not falter; they will not fail,
Though red the rain and gray the gale:
They are your boys—Love knows no sea—
Born to be brave, bound to be free!

TO THE WOMAN WHO STAYS AT HOME



O woman who stays at home to wait
His footsteps at the cottage gate;
O woman who may not go to France,
This then, O sister, is still thy chance,
To watch, to serve in the silent place
With a tearful heart and a cheerful face.
This then is thine.
O woman, sister, comrade of mine!

O woman who may not bear the sword
Against the teeming Teuton horde,
I know that a sword will pierce your breast,
When the long night falls and you can not rest;
I know you will wear your wreath of thorn;
And yet I know you still would scorn
To call him back
From the scarlet track
When the bugles call in the morn!

PAX VOBISCUM



To thee, fair dove, whose voice at last
Is heard where once the cannon roared,
We come to bury creed and caste
And hatred trampled by the horde;
No more the red sword takes its toll
For Peace was e'er war's gleaming goal.
Roll on, warm tides of pity, roll!
For hate is ebbing fast.

To thee, the nations' Prince of Peace,
Whose victory crowns our brow,
The sword that slays must ever cease;
And toil must take the plow;
No longer greed shall rule the world
The flag of brotherhood's unfurled;
Liberty's bright torch shall ne'er be hurled
In wanton hate, or by caprice!

We come one hundred million strong
To chant our nation's hymn.
Right tore the robes from regal wrong;
The tyrant's jeweled crown grew dim;
The truth was mighty and prevailed
Where wrong, embattled, fought and failed,
By freedom's shining lance impaled—
Then write it PEACE! There is no synonym!

Bells of the Sea

THE BELLS OF THE SEA



I heard one night the bells of the sea
 Tolling the sailor's destiny:
 Sighing, falling
 Dying, calling
 Till they broke with the surge
 In a wailing dirge
 On a wild and wave-washed lea—

Ah, the bells of the sea
 How they called to me
 With an infinite misery!

I heard one night the toll of the bells
 As they rose and rang the wild sea's knells:
 Throbbing, leaping
 Sobbing, weeping
 Till they sank with a sigh
 Like those that lie
 In the grave of the long green swells.

Ah, the bells of the deep
 How they stole my sleep
 Mid the storm's fantastic spells!

And I could not rest for the wailing notes
 Of those deep tongues in those deep throats:
 Breaking, booming,
 Quaking, glooming,
 Till I paced the floor—
 Till I sought the shore
 With the men in the oil-skin coats:

Ah, the bells of doom,
 How they rang of the tomb
 And the deep green grave of the boats!



THE LIGHT OF WESTERN SEAS



I sing of the light of the Western seas
Where the wild waves toss in glee,
And the voice of the eagle mounts the breeze
And the blue tides play on the golden keys
In a mighty minstrelsy.

I sing of the light of the Western seas—
Of the seas that must be free;
Of the ship of mail,
Of the ships of sail,
And all the vessels that breast the gale
With the colors of LIBERTY!

I sing of the light of the Western seas—
And of the shores by the seas caressed;
Of the captains brave and the sailors bold
As any Viking in days of old;
Of Freedom ne'er yet in the shambles sold
By the men of the Golden West.

I sing of the light of the Western seas,
Where the tides roll swift and strong;
Of the days to come
When the fife and the drum
And the voice of the bugle alike are dumb,
And Right rules over wrong.

I sing of the light of the Western seas,
Of the light that ne'er grows dim;
Of the women fair and the children sweet,
Of the wood and the wold and the crowded street,
Of the lane of blue where the two seas meet
To chant their battle hymn.
But I sing with the hope that peace once more
Shall whiten the scarlet world
With anthems that echo from shore to shore—
Till the last red flag is furled!

THE MASTER OF THE SEA

(A Prayer for Worldwide Peace)



Long, long ago upon a storm-scourged sea,
When waves rolled high and winds rose strong and shrill,
Was heard the voice of Him of Galilee
Bidding the raging sea and storm be still.
Clear, calm and sweet as shepherd pipes at eve,
He gave the word that calmed the beating deep
When frosty-white the breaking billows heave,
Like hungry tigers crouching for the leap.
Swift as the lightning's flash they glide away,
Sinuous as serpents in the paths of light;
The master speaks; they dare not disobey,
Nor wait to question His almighty right.

O Prince of Galilee, so wondrous yet,
Speak thy deep calm upon our troubled sea,
When all our shores with crimson tides are wet,
And men forget the stainless peace of Thee.
Bid clamor cease and still this scarlet wave,
O Prince Imperial, calm this raging flood;
Teach us again the olden peace you gave,
Lest we be blinded with a mist of blood.
The nations rage, the waves of war run high
The children huddle in the blackened streets;
Hear thou the voice of women when they cry
Unheard amid the thunderous roar of fleets.

O God of battles, Lord of a myriad isles,
O thou whose name is written in the stars,
Give us the peace that, filled with mercy, smiles,
For thou art mightier than all earthly czars.
Speak to the warring world and lead it back
Back from its Liege, away from Waterloo,
Lest it should grope along the beaten track
Into the jungled dark that once it knew.
Lead thou the Teuton, guide the warring Gaul,
Touch deep the Briton and the Muscovite
With that strange peace, which, stealing over all,
Bids them forget the weapons and the fight.

O men made in His image, sons of God,
Ye who have stained His cross too long with blood,
Whose grappling armies beat the quivering sod
And hue with scarlet every Belgian flood,
List ye to Him who gives the breath of kings,
Whose white battalions hover in midair;
Ye who invite the vulture's brooding wings,
And curse the world with battle's black despair.
List ye to Him, and mark His message well:
Halt ye and hear Him, swarming Teuton horde;
Behold His voice rings like a mighty bell,
"All they that take shall perish with the sword."



MARINERS OF HOPE



I saw him walk beside a sea,
Caught like a gem in gold,
Where loomed the hills of Galilee,
So storied, grim, and old.

"Follow me," I heard him cry;
I saw the stalwart men;
I read the answer in each eye,
Such as had never been.

"Follow me," they left the ship;
They sought another sea;
Where scarlet sails of victory dip
Beyond the melting lea.

Two thousand years have coursed the tide;
The nets; the boats; the crew
All these have passed; the ocean wide
Sings of the ships it knew.

But shrank they from the cup of pain
Fresh from the purple press?
Or did they leave the lake in vain,
To toil for treasures less?

They bore a flame to farthest isle
Across the dusky bar;
And wait the dream-girt goldenwhile
Beyond the evening star.

THE DREAM SHIPS

(Dedicated to Captain Z. J. Drake.)



Long, long I watched the cloud-ships sailing past
With glistening sails pinned to each purple mast;
Soft seas of amber tinged with emerald tides
Roll on in splendor where the fair fleet rides,
Its prows e'er pointed toward the golden west,
Where jeweled stars gleam in the twilight's breast.
The night, just bending o'er the drowsy earth,
Pauses to catch the wildbird's lute of mirth.

The ships sail on into the golden sea,
Full freighted now with all the dreams that be,
And oft the fair Pilot, Hope, gives goodly cheer and
 smiles,
Sounding the clear fathoms near the Happy Isles,
Where Hesperus, bright shepherdess of the herded stars,
Kindles her beacons 'long the opal bars,
Lest aught of harm befall the shining fleet
Where night's black capes loom up with hidden feet.

Fleet of my dreams, sail on, sail on, for aye,
Into the mystic sea beyond the pale dead day,
Bearing my soul with all its yearning sighs
Along the star-buoyed leagues beyond the twilight skies,
Into the harbor of the silver moon,
Where the white heron stands within the still lagoon—
Ah, argosy of dear dead dreams, farewell.
Long since thy pilot heard the harbor bell.

But still, like sad Prometheus, I must stay
Trembling and cold—a beggar, old and gray,
Ere I drink deep from founts of gleaming youth,
Which, springing full-powered from the hills of truth,
Give back to Tithonus all the youth he lost,
Nor chills the heart with barter or with cost—
Ay, sadly wait whilst ships of dreams so gay
Sail 'neath the silvery moon along the milky way.

Oh, far, fair Pilot, tell me of the night,
Whence all my birds of dream have taken flight—
White ships aflutter like a flock of doves;
Old hopes, old dreams, old joys and old lost loves.
What sighing zephyrs ripple those still seas?

What Pan makes music in that star-loft breeze?
There is no answer, and I fain would wait,
Bowed like an old man on life's broken gate.

Mayhap from some high tower beyond the stars
My soul may yet catch all the heavenly bars;
Mayhap some singing Orpheus, knee-deep in the purple
tide,
May yet with sounding shell tell where they ride;
Ship of youth and ship of joy.
Long moons agone, and ne'er a ship ahoy;
Ship of love and ship of deathless hope;
Sometimes from these I've caught a golden rope.

Like one adrift upon a wide, wild sea
When phantom mist blots out the far, dim lea,
And strange white birds dip down with mocking wing,
And life creeps back like some wild, hunted thing
Into the jungles of the day-long night;
It was then I saw the mast-line of my ships of flight
And spoke the pilot with a trumpet call.
He sailed straight on, nor answered me at all.

Beyond Orion and the Pleiades,
The ships sail on amid the golden keys,
Where sheen of coral hues the gentle wave,
And infant winds blow back the kiss they gave;
Where silver seaweed gleams at mellow noon
And starry islands keep eternal June;
Sail on forever, for they'll come no more
Within the hail of this bleak, barren shore.

And yet, somehow, I fain would have them back,
Bright and bonny, goodly ships they were,
And every fond dream had its worshipper;
Every day was marked with rose-lit morn,
Where fair Diana blew her wild, free horn;
Yon hills were bathed in youth's red flowing wine,
The purple grapes pressed from life's joyous vine.

The night is creeping o'er the dim, gray hills;
Where once the river flowed one sees but rills;
Blue-black the harbor, shot with twinkling lights;
Old ships are anchored in the land-locked bights;
Youth's bright galleons—ah, they've gone so long,
Like some swift arrow or some long-hushed song,
We may not have them back, but some fair eve, I know,
We'll find the sweet dream-ships of long ago.

THE SHIPS OF YOUTH



I launched my ships in the morning
With a song-filled heart and gay,
When the crown of the east was adorning
The brow of a royal day.

Not a rift of cloud in the offing;
Just a fair young breeze on the sea
Where snowy gulls were doffing
The silvery spray in their glee.

When all the world was singing,
Why should my own heart be sad?
Hark! the bells of the sea are ringing:
"Ahoy to thee, sailor lad."

My heart from youth's chalice was drinking
The wine that ever was red;
And I smiled at the mariner's shrinking
From the things the smooth sea said.

For youth will ever be hoping,
It's pilot's the Morning Star;
While the ancients were muttering, moping,
My fair ships crossed the bar.

Far out to sea they went skimming,
Aflutter like doves in the spring.
Far toward the border where, dimming,
The sea is a turquoise in a ring.

And I smiled still more at the quailing
Of the seasoned sons of the deep,
Whose sail-stripped vessels were wailing
Where I sighted the harbor's steep.

For every wave was kissing
The feet of my joyous ships;
And how can demons be hissing
In the warmth of a lover's lips?

The sun in the arc was smiling;
The scented winds were so fair;
The eyes of the sea so beguiling,
Its spray like a maiden's hair.

* * * *

But the tempest came down with a rushing,
 Like the charge of a maddened bull;
 The jaws of the wild winds crushing;
 The air with the sea was full.

* * * *

My ships limped home in the gloaming,
 Tattered and bruised and torn.
 Wiser I for their roaming;
 For I weep when the mariners mourn.



“THE BRIDE OF THE SEA”



O, Venice, fair bride of the blue, blue sea,
 Aglitter with the necklace of a thousand lights,
 In thy white hands the lute of melody
 Steals all the magic of Arabian nights.

Thy long, slim fingers gleam with sea-gifts rare;
 Summer's rich largess lingers in thy smile;
 The soft-lipped waters kiss each star-lit stair,
 Where Love and Beauty pause a little while.

“Sunrise in Venice”—Ah, what painter's art
 Ere yet could match that beauty unsurpassed;
 That mingled color of the sea and mart;
 The ships at anchor, purple to the mast?

Bars of opal, stained with amethyst;
 White doves passing in a fluttering cloud;
 Pillars of porphyry; temples carved of mist;
 The lips of morn too young to laugh aloud.

Morn's rosy fingers on the blue sea-keys;
 A burst of sunlight, gilding dome and spire;
 Love's ardent whisper in the soft sea breeze—
 O, Venice, goddess with the golden lyre.

Thy lover the sea lays treasures at thy feet;
 Pearls from the deep sea caves, and silver sands.
 Upon his white-maned charger rides he to meet
 Thy maids—the ships—His emerald chariot waits
 his bride's commands.

THE DRIFTING DERELICT



The sodden hulk of a bonny ship
Lies low in the gulch of the seas,
Where the snowy sea gulls scream and dip
And the mocking trade-winds tease.

It crouches low in the deep sea lane,
A ghost of the phantom line;
Where the spoon-drift lashes its deck like rain,
And the slimy sea-weeds twine.

Its mission is death to the living ships;
A skeleton stands at its wheel.
No siren warns from its fleshless lips,
As it rolls in its drunken reel.

And many a goodly ship goes down
Like a wounded bird in the dark,
Afar from London town;
Or, mayhap a foreign barque.

For the ship unburied knows no shores
In the curse of its splintered spars,
Like a wounded bull it leaps and gores
Nor heeds the ships its scars.

And so, awash mid the breaking wave
It drifts from year to year;
A wraith of the deep whose fathomed grave
Sent it forth on its quest so drear.

And, 'ware ye, merry mariners;
'Ware ye the hulks that lurk
So deep where the smoky sea-rim blurs
To stab with a hidden dirk.

Look well, O keen-eyed watching man;
Trust not the sea too well;
The limpid blue of the waves you scan
Hides much in the long green swell.

A SONG OF THE WILD SEA



Oh, ho, for the sea of the wild free gales,
And the kiss of the waves in my face,
And a ship that skims the sea with her sails,
In the wide of the open space:

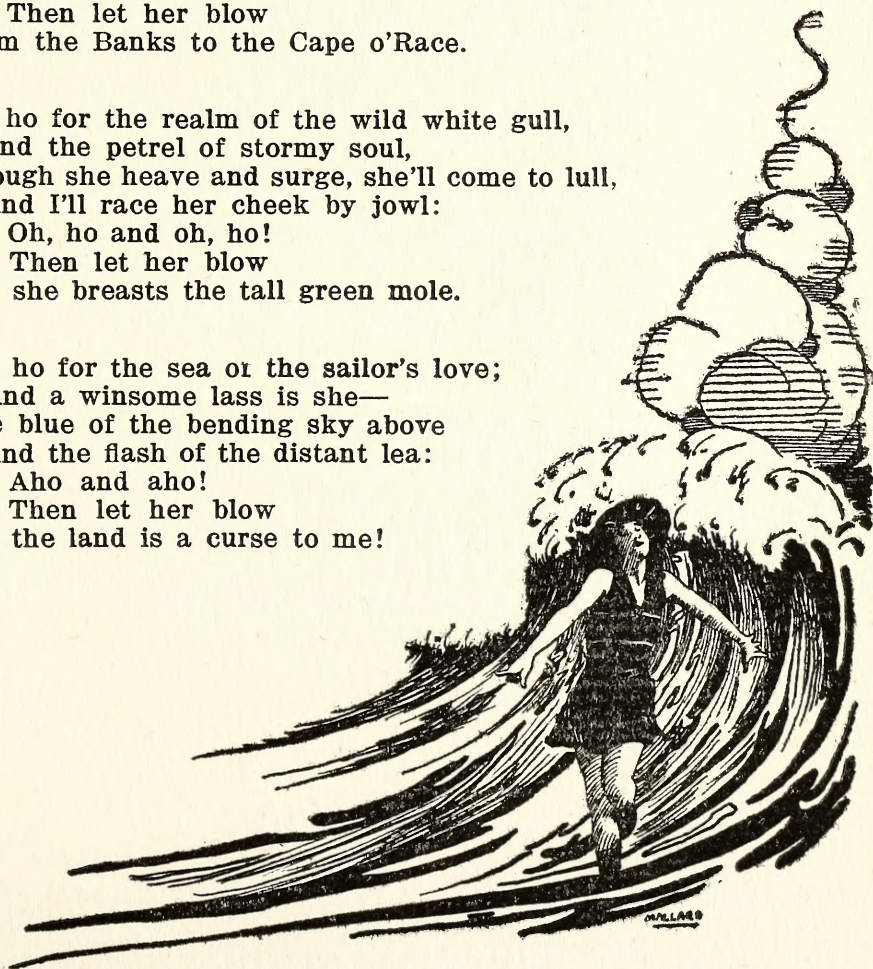
Oh, ho and oh, ho!
Then let her blow
From the Banks to the Cape o'Race.

Oh, ho for the realm of the wild white gull,
And the petrel of stormy soul,
Though she heave and surge, she'll come to lull,
And I'll race her cheek by jowl:

Oh, ho and oh, ho!
Then let her blow
Till she breasts the tall green mole.

Oh, ho for the sea or the sailor's love;
And a winsome lass is she—
The blue of the bending sky above
And the flash of the distant lea:

Aho and aho!
Then let her blow
For the land is a curse to me!



THE COMING OF JEAN RIBAUT



Over the sea sailed Jean Ribault,
From the sunny fields of France,
To the land where the fresh wild roses grow,
And the golden sunbeams dance—
To a Royal Port of sparkling blue
Came merry Jean and his bonny crew,
With quip and song and a fling at chance;

For a Captain bold was Jean Ribault,
And he bridled the bounding main;
And he anchored his ships in the port, aho,
Where the seahounds ne'er had lain—
To the Port of jassamine-garlanded trees,
With the balm of spring in the rippling breeze;
And he found a fairer Seine.

But Jean Ribault was a rover gay,
And he took to the sea one morn;
Right merrily his ships stood 'way
(For Jean was a sailor born)
Toward the shores o' France,
Where the old romance
Called back like a golden horn.

* * * *

And long they waited for Jean Ribault,
But his good ships came no more,
And the song of the West was a sigh of woe,
Where the blue sea kissed the shore—
Gone jest and quip,
As they built a ship,
Whose sails were the robes they wore;

Then out to sea with a merry heart
That nothing e'er could daunt;
Their compass faith and hope their chart
'Gainst Famine grim and gaunt—
Oh, brave, brave crew,
Hats off to you!
Who laughed at the frowns of Want.

But spake they ill of bonny Jean,
Gay rover o' the sea?
Nay, little of ill they said, I ween;
For well they knew that he
Would not come back
O'er the wide blue track,
With his old-time revelry.

"We're going to meet bold Jean," they said;
And they flung to the breeze the sail;
"When Jean comes not we starve for bread,
And the children's cheeks grow pale—
To meet his merry ships we'll go.
Three cheers for France and Jean Ribault,
And a dare to the howling gale!"

* * * *

And so they drifted day and day,
At the whim of the wind and the tide;
Nor once did listen to dark dismay,
Nor curse bold Jean nor chide—
Till in midsea an English barque
Rescued the crew o' The Meadow Lark
Adrift on the ocean wide.

SICK FOR THE SEA



Oh, I am sick for the blue, blue sea,
Where the white gulls scream and dip;
For I'm deadly tired of the dull brown lea,
And the restless, throbbing heart of me
Sails on with my bonny ship.

With my dancing ship in the piping gales,
Her nose to the scented West,
With a pride in the swell of her snowy sails,
And a leap in her dripping, sea-walled rails
That mounts to the highest crest.

Oh, I am sick for the rolling deep,
And the wind in my face, my child;
I pace the deck in the watch of sleep,
And ever the long sea-vigil keep,
Where the waves run high and wild.

Oh! I see her yonder, below the hills,
And she beckons me with her mast—
Alas, my lad, 'tis the land that kills.
With its screaming marts and its smoking mills,
And its killing me, too, at last.

Sail on, sweet ship, to the uttermost sea;
With flesh crucified by the land,
My heart still beats in the heart of thee;
Where the vagrant winds roam wild and free
As any Romany band.

Sail on, sweet ship; my lights burn dim—
I can not see my chart,
And the shadows flock to the far, faint rim,
Where thy sails stand out so neat and trim—
But I'll follow thee with my heart.

Bells of Melody

THE CALL

(A Devonshire Shepherd Song)



Wake, Shepherd, wake!
The night lifts its dark wings;
Yon, in the brake,
The nesting throstle sings;
Long since a watchful byre-cock clarioned day;
Thy sheep are waiting to be led away
Over the lea
Down to the blue, blue sea.

Wake, Shepherd, wake!
The morn beams young and fair;
I saw her break
A rose to grace her hair;
Thy sheep are restless, they will wander far
Beyond the sunset's golden bar—
Over the hills
Where run the golden rills.

Wake, Shepherd, wake!
The day is at the noon;
Another's hand will take
Thy shepherd's crook full soon,
And lead thy sheep into the sunless vale,
Along the dim and purple-shadowed trail,
Beyond the ghostly dunes,
Where the were-wind croons.

ON HEARING MME. BARIENTOS SING



I heard thy voice in "Silence Over All,"
Soft as a flute attuned to piccolo;
I heard the plash of silvery waterfall,
And harps Aeolian where the South winds blow.

And silence mantled all the dreaming west;
The wine of sunset stained the emerald sea;
The evening star at watch above the crest,
And all the winds ahush along the lea.

I saw in fancy flowers from old Spain,
And glimpsed the garments of a festal throng;
The mockbird hushed her own sweet glad refrain
To drink the music of thy golden song.

I felt the silence of the autumn world,
When twilight tapered all the darkling trees;
And all the leaves were wrought in cloth of gold,
And midnight touched the Westwind's magic keys.

The autumn's harvest gleamed in amber field;
Within the wood the wildgrape's purple hue;
And music's vineyard brought its bourgeoned yield,
And laid its largess at the feet of you.

Of you fair daughter from bright Spanish skies,
Thy eyes as dark as slumberous pools at night;
E'en Orpheus pauses when thy bird-voice flies
From star to star in arias of delight.

THE SONGS OF THE SEA



Oh, soft is the summer song of the sea,
So like to a mother's lullaby;
Ripple and tinkle and sunlit tide,
And a-ho for the deep where the white ships ride!
 A-ho! and a-ho!
 Where the spiced winds blow,
And the sea is a June day's bride.

Oh, sad is the autumn song of the deep,
Where the wailing ghosts of the breakers leap;
A sob and a croon and a ghastly moan;
And 'ware ye the troughs where the good ships groan
 Beware! and beware!
 The maid's green hair,
And the tears in her low, sad tone.

Oh, wild is the winter song of the mer,
Flung high to the pipes of a throbbing fear;
A-boom and a-crash—the guns of hell;
The far-flung peal of the breakers' bell;
 A-clang! and a-clang!
 'Ware the tiger's fang,
Hid deep in the long green swell.

A SHEPHERD SONG OF OLD ARCADY



The sky is fresh and the moon is young,
And the sheep come tinkling out of the east.
Hark ye! the shepherds song; 'tis sung
At the jocund morning feast.

"Come trip, my Love Rose, lightly;
The morning sun shines brightly;
The fragrant breeze stirs slightly
Under the myrtle bough."

The sea's an emerald, silver-sheened,
And the wind's the voice of a lamb new-weaned;
The robin's call is a golden flute,
And every brook is an angel's lute.

"Why comes my Red Rose slowly?
The morning vow is holy;
The blackbird sings so lowly
Under the hawthorn hedge."

The field's a mirror framed with gold,
And the sweetest story ever told
I fain would tell, fair lass, to thee
Under the shade of the apple tree.

"Then come, my Moss Rose, blithely;
Come like the willow lithely;
Where the dappled shadows writhely
Dance to the dryads' call."

SINGING IN THE SNOW



Little wren,
Singing in the snow,
When brake and fen
With drifted whiteness glow
(Mayhap to bring thee death),
Would that I thy sunny cheer
Might know,
When Life's wild bugles blow,
With wintry breath.

Little wren,
Come cheer disheartened men,
Set me to singing in the snow,
When sorrow haunts me so;
Bring me the gospel of the light.
A bird call, throbbing, might
Save a poor soul,
When the deep waves roll,
And life's lone, desert beach
Lies shuddering in the night.

Little wren,
I pri' thee sing again.
Somehow the fear of death
Is not so great,
When, in the snow,
Thou art calling to thy mate.
I seem to see the light
Beyond the sunset's bars,
Where Hesperus herds
Her flock of golden stars;
In thy bright, love-lit call
I glimpse, somehow,
The glory of it all.

TO A FLIRT



I flee the spell of thy bright, smiling eyes,
Blue as the blue of any summer's skies;
Thy face e'en fairer than the lily grows—
Ah, me, the hauteur of thy queenly pose!

I hear the mocking tinkle of thy silvery voice;
Too well I know thy fickle, dancing way.
Lord pity him, the favored of thy choice—
The gilded fool of one brief passing day!

I dread the coral reef of thy red rose-bud lips—
A reef of smiles where wreck the golden ships;
The flowing beauty of thy silken hair—
So like a web—it mocks me everywhere.

I flee the sunlight of thy guileless face;
Thy hand as soft as any angel's wing;
Ah, me, the chill beneath thy sunlit grace—
The sting of winter in the smile of spring!



A SONG OF THE SUNRISE



The call of a quail in the dappled mead,
And the cup of the morn is brimming;
Old Pan pipes soft on his silver reed;
And the god of the morning mounts his steed,
Swift as the swallow skimming.

The thrush's song in the nodding brake,
And the jeweled dewdrops gleaming;
And the song of the toiling men who take
The bath of the morn for nature's sake
Whilst the idle world lies dreaming.

TO A MOCKING BIRD



O bird of music, star of the feathered throng,
Sweet mimic songster of the springmad days;
Whence didst thou steal the Promethean fire of song,
To kindle field and woodland with thy lays!

I heard thy flute while yet the dawn was young
And ere the south wind's hundred harps were strung;
Whisper of violets, murmur of the rose;
The scented woodland where the dark brook flows—
All these I heard reflected in thy strain
When morn's red lips kissed all the fields again.

Thou art the Sappho of the balmy South,
O bird of music with the heavenly mouth;
In thee incarnate throbs the heart of June,
When velvet shadows mock the crescent moon;
Mirth-mad, thy voice will touch each songster's keys,
Thy mockery ringing in the balmy breeze.

This morn I heard thee wake the purple dawn
O mocking minstrel, feigned Chanticleer,
When silvered lay the long elm-shadowed lawn
Where brooding night had wept each dewy tear;
In thy glad notes I heard the woodland choir,
Each bird's call strung to one grand Lesbian lyre.

The purl
Of brooks;
The swirl
Of eddying flow;
The leafy nooks
Where sunbeams
Come and go.

Marigold,
And violets;
A lover bold;
A maid's regrets;
Dawn and dusk;
A star-lit way;
The smell of musk
Where spring's wild lilies stay;

A limpid pool;
An airy nest;
Night calm and cool,
As day dreams in the west—

All these are figments in thy mimic song,
O bird of music, star of the feathered throng.



TO A MOCKING BIRD



Hail to thee, minstrel of the scented morn,
How oft I've blessed thy merry mimic lay,
When Dawn steals pink-toed through the dripping corn,
And rose-lipped Summer laughs the clouds away.

How full of life, and youth's unmingled joy
Thy song within the snow-bloomed apple tree;
It makes me once again a barefoot boy,
Brown-legged and coatless, strong and fancy free.

The lilt of lutes; the twang of harps; the croon of wind
and brook;
Fresh from the orchard one sweet silvery stream;
Sappho singing in a leaf-grown nook;
May day and music in a maze of dream!

Sing on, sweet minstrel, recall the days gone by,
Swift, and as vagrant, as the swallows fly;
Memories, memories—ah, they live so long;
And all my youth is singing in thy song.

DAPHNE AT THE BROOK



Blue were the eyes of violets,
And white and gold the daises
Where the meadow brook ran still and clear and deep;
For fair spring, in varied phases,
Tripping through the woodland mazes,
Broke quickly all the silken bonds of sleep.

Dark were the shadowed pools,
Yet they glowed with morning's glory
Where the fragile ferns and water lilies grew;
And there, as in old story,
And in legends quaint and hoary,
Fair Daphne bent to see her face anew.

But lingering near was Cupid,
Artful archer with the quiver,
And he fitted a gold arrow to his bow.
Heartless, he watched her shiver
Like the ripples of a river
When she saw within a face she did not know.

For 'twas Love's face so yearning
With sweet beauty of the morning,
And merry as a lad just out of school.
So she looked there long unscorning,
Whilst the fairy elfs, adorning,
Tied her heart with crimson roses to the pool.

SONGS IN THE RAIN



The day was rainy and dreary and dark,
But I heard in the meadow the song of a lark,
And I said, "Sad heart, be mirthsome too;
For back of the clouds is the smiling blue;
And out in the grey of the tinkling rain
I hear the mock-bird's old sweet strain.

"For the day is never so dark, if you sing,
And the shadows will pass like birds on the wing;
A merry song is a charm so rare
That it lifts the weight from a heart of care;
And the sun will shine where the raindrops fall,
And the dark wood throb to the blackbird's call.

"There's a glitter of gold in the darkling sky—
O heart of mine, the light draws nigh,"
And I press my face to the window pane,
Where flash the swords of the silver rain;
And out in the orchard the bird-songs ring.
So, heart of mine, we'll sing, we'll sing!

THE SONG OF THE BROOK



On to the sea! On to the sea!
And aho! for the heaving deep—
Rinkle and tinkle and golden glow,
I bear the gift of the rain and the snow;
And I never stop nor sleep!

On to the sea! On to the sea!
And aho! for the ocean wide—
Ripple and eddy and silvery flash,
As swift as a charger on I dash
Where the white-sailed squadrons ride.

On to the sea! On to the sea!
And aho! where the trade-winds blow—
Shimmer and glimmer and murmuring note,
Attuned to the mock-bird's magic throat,
And down to the sea I go.

THE CALL AND THE ANSWER



A Greek Choral Song



I called with the voice of sea and star,
When the night wind whispered low;
"Where the white moon's lakes of lilies are,
Fair Love, I fain would go,"
And the answer came from a fragrant bough
Of wild acanthus, "Heart, somehow
The gods would say thee no;
For thee and me, in the blue, blue sea,
The Lethian fountains flow."

I called in the song of the springing lark,
When the day lay young and cool,
With his white limbs swathed in the clinging dark,
Beside a purple pool;
"Where the silver heron stands knee-deep
In the dimpling stream of the star of sleep,
Oh, fair maid, I would rest,
Nor wake again to drink the pain
From the grapes of passion pressed."

And she answered low in the sunset's glow,
When the gold was on the sea,
"O heart of mine, let us drink the wine
Of an age-long victory,
In the laurel grove by a blue sea cove,
Where the winds rove wild and free!"

No more for me the marble sea where the white stone
angels stand;
I heard the call 'yond the ivied wall,
When the dew sprites kissed the land;
And through the green-leaved grove I ran,
As swift as any lover can
Lured on by the pipes of Pan.

SONG OF A MAY MORNING



Fresh from the dewy bath of the dawn,
Sweet with the breath of the flowers,
Memories, memories of days long gone,
And the tinkle of golden showers.

Bird calls out in the orchard green,
And the smell of the good red earth;
For May comes forth, like a fairy queen,
To dance to the mock-bird's mirth.

And Phyllis—ah, her eyes so blue
They haunt me night and day;
And her lips like a rose of red, red hue
Abloom with the kiss of May!

Oh, let me away where the brown thrush sings,
And the brook bears gifts to the sea;
For I envy not the wealth of kings,
So light is the heart of me!

TO MUSIC



O, Music, melody divine,
Flowing on forever like new-vintaged wine,
Fresh from Olympian arbors of the olden days,
When Orpheus woke the woodland with his golden lays;
Flowing on like sunlight in unceasing streams;
Bearing an argosy of care into the sea of dreams;
Stealing the senses with a rippling flow,
Soft as a moonbeam,
Heavenly sweet and low;
Deep as the surges of the wind-stirred deep;
Faint as the rhythm of an infant's sleep;
Wafting to Heaven on the wings of prayer,
Chanting the echo of profound despair.

O, Music, maiden of the many mood,
So gentle-hearted and so strangely rude;
O, fickle sunbeam dimming into cloud,
How oft I've heard thee laugh aloud,
Only to find thee 'mid a mist of tears,
A L'Allegro of Hope, an Il Penseroso of fears.

I heard thee singing in the golden rain,
Upon thy lips the wind grape's scarlet stain,
Thy voice melodious as a shepherd's pipe,
When autumn's harvest gleameth amber-ripe.

I heard thee * * * nor could glimpse thee anywhere,
For thou hadst vanished in the thin blue air.

THE SLEIGH BELLS



Silently a glistening whiteness crept
Upon the earth while children slept,
White wondrous crystals whirling down,
Until they mantled croft and town,
And all the countryside was dressed
In stainless splendor,
While winter, wrinkled, storm depressed,
Crooned like the witch of Endor.

And when night's starry crown had lain
Upon the snow without a stain,
And crisp and cool, sharp as a whip,
The wind was wine to every lip,
The sound of sleighbells smote the air
With silvery sweetness:
And love and joy outsped despair
With fairy fleetness.

Ah, days of youth, I drink thy wine
From the e'er green and fruitful vine,
Despite the chalice of the years
And manhoods' cup of grief and tears
When live again the days of old,
In golden brightness;
And sleighbells bring to wood and wold
Their sweet-delightness.

Bells of Memory

AN ODE TO THE MEMORY OF ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

(A recent English critic has sought to place Tennyson
among the minor poets)



Sweet singer of Albion's golden past,
Whose heart is hushed within its marble hall,
A voice from out the ocean deep and vast,
Seems still to echo with thy lyric call.

One hears thee where the wild waves writhe and moan;
Where circling curfews dimly rise and fall,
And cold gray seas break on the brackish stone,
Reared high against the towering ocean wall.

Where twilight creeps beneath the Western stars,
And white lakes shimmer in the dripping moon,
Beyond the sea o'erflowing purple bars,
To lisp and lilt with many a magic croon.

One hears thee where the martial bugles blow,
And clashing weapons forge a ring of fire—
The blare of trumpets, fitful, faint and low,
When grim-eyed war hath spent its frantic ire.

Immortal singer, thou art everywhere,
In "horns of elfland faintly blowing;"
Thy voice with springtide lades the balmy air,
When o'er the lea the twilight lamps are glowing.

Thy muse was "borrowed from the classic past!"
Perish the thought! as well, forsooth, it may.
Thy songs were pearls from life's great ocean cast,
And thy clear vision ran beyond thy day.

One feels the passion of thy beating soul—
A wild bird fluttering 'gainst its goading thrall
In thy deep voice the tides of history roll;
The woodland moaning while its dead leaves fall.

It seems but yesterday that thou didst sail,
Beyond "the paths of all the Western stars;"
Aquest like one who seeks the Holy Grail,
Thy ship of passage snow white to the spars.

Mayhap thou art anchored near the "Happy Isles,"
And with hand shaded eyes gaze out to sea,
Awaiting there the dreamless afterwhiles,
When all the ships of song shall sail to thee.

Ruthless the hand that seeks to take thy crown;
Thou art the master singer of them all;
Fain would I take my heart and lay it down,
Where thine is silent in its marble hall.

The moon, my master, is the queen of night;
Undimmed her splendor by a single star.
Lord of the isles, thine is the kingly right,
Till all the ships of song have "crossed the bar."

TO WILLIAM SHAKESPERE



Immortal bard of England's golden years,
Sweet master singer of the lyric strain,
Thy songs were pearls of mingled smiles and tears,
Rich with a splendor that will never wane.

Fresh from the grotto one clear shining stream;
The languorous perfume of the scented night;
The elfin fancies of a halcyon dream;
The snowy pillars of eternal light.

The wail of winter and the summer's bloom;
The breath of orchards and the woodland way;
I heard thee singing where the breakers boom,
When mothering morn crooned o'er the dreaming
day.

The gentle winds, the idly flapping sail;
The rime of autumn and the heathered lea;
The rush of wings; the darkly gathering gale—
The deep and solemn music of the sea.

Ah, Bard of Avon, not the flight of years,
Nor all who drink the Muses' metric wine,
Can take thy toll of laughter light—and tears;
And rob thy garden of the rose divine.

The rose of song that bloomed on Avon's shore,
Full-petaled, fragrant with the dewy morn;
Its perfume lingers sweet as when of yore
It graced the garden of the heaven-born.

On high Olympus with the gods of song,
Thy throne the loftiest, thine the golden lute,
Thine the crown of all the laureled throng;
In those green groves where gleams the golden
fruit.

I glimpsed thee where the Lesbian Sappho sang,
In that fair isle of lotus and of thyme;
And at thy name the halls of history rang
And thy clear-flute-call marked the end of time.

TO THE OLD YEAR



Old and gray
I saw you go
Along the way
Of shining snow:
"The way of death."
One whispereth
But I would not have it so.

Old and gray,
Scant-locked and faint,
You went, they say,
Like some old quaint,
The way of gloom
To the dim, low room,
Where sinner sleeps, and saint.

Old and gray—
But I love you still;
And you've gone away
Over the hill:
The great white hill of the golden west
With your beard so long on your stooping breast,
To march in the old years' drill.

TO LIEUT. DON KIRKMAN



("Greater love hath no man than this: that a man lay down
his life for his friends")

To you who faced the foe in France,
And crossed the homeward sea;
Who drew with death a ghostly chance
And lost the victory.
I fain would bring the laurel wreath
That hands of history bequeath
To garland your white brow;
The praise is green, you sleep beneath;
You do not need it now.

But as you sleep in that low inn,
Where heroes have their rest,
Who knows what guardian angels pin
Their favors on your breast?
The world was bright and beckoned you,
But to your red blood you were true,
And heard the helpless cries:
And never shines the sky so blue,
As when some heroe dies!

Sleep on heroic son who gave
A life in quest of life to save;
The blood of Norsemen ran no whit more red;
The wreath of memory shines upon your head;
Rest you well on glory pillowed deep;
You are not dead:
You sleep!

TO L. P. C.—AN APPRECIATION



It was not mine to know you face to face;
And yet I knew you in your charming grace
Of Grecian art and blue Italian skies,
And in the poet's song that never dies.

I knew you where the goat-feet of old Pan
Had left a trail where wandering waters ran
From grottoes singing to the Orphean lyre,
When minstrel summer trained her Lesbian choir.

I knew you where the Grecian gardens bloom
In flowered wreath above old Homer's tomb;
I heard you singing in Hellenic strain—
Would God, I might hear that sweet lute again!

And yet I know that I shall hear it yet
Where fades no rose nor droops the violet,
In snowy heights of glad Olympian song
With Homer, Vergil and the lyric throng.

TO LIEUT. DAVID M. PRINCE



(A Hero of War and Peace)

Strong son of Carolina's blood,
Who won your rank in France;
Who lost your life amid the flood
To give a child a chance;
We wreath a garland wet with tears—
A garland green through all the years;
Hero of two hemispheres,
Unrivalled in romance!

Like unto him who also died
To save another's life;
You did not count the whirling tide
Where waves of death ran rife;
You only thought of giving aid
Though death was there in pale parade,
The law of manhood was obeyed
By you who thrilled to freedom's fife.

The cup of sacrifice you drank,
How red it gleamed that day!
Great was the foe: you swam—you sank—
You walk the white heroic way;
The vigils of the years keep score,
The badge of courage that you wore
Shall shine resplendent ever more,
Where strong men watch and pray.

A HEROINE OF THE SCOURGE



(To Miss Swannie Barker, who fell a victim to pneumonia
while nursing patients in the Anson Sanatorium)

Others have sung of the men who fell
In the front of the raging fray;
They have told of their courage and done it well,
But I sing not of them today.

I sing of a woman who gave her life
To help in the healing art,
But death came on with his reaper's knife,
And her's was the martyr's part.

She did not murmur, nor once complain
That the thorns had crowned her brow;
For she was the angel that eased their pain,
And her spirit would not allow.

Though she never wore a crown of gold,
Nor won a croix de guerre,
She bore a cross that was ages old,
And higher than any here.

It was the cross of Him who said,
"Take your cross and follow me,"
And He placed the crown on her tired head
In the hall of eternity.

IN MEMORIAM—TO MY BROTHER CLARENCE



Though thou wast with us such a little while, O brother
mine,

Thy sweet and cheerful smile was so divine
That thou didst teach us, even in thy pain,
To glean love's largess from life's sordid grain.

For thine it was to make the dark world bright;
(Ah, thou didst live so long in thy few years);
Thou who didst pluck from thorns a rose so white,
And wouldst not let us see thy tears.

Thine, Little Brother, was the artist's soul;
And thine the poet's dream;
Visions of beauty e'er became thy goal;
And thou didst drink so deep of love's pure stream!

It was thy life—and rich thy return,
Filling the chalice of each loving heart
With grateful fragrance flowing from the urn
Of thy sweet soul, unstained by any mart.

Untarnished as the fairest lily grows,
Thou left us with a smile upon thy face:
Thy life pure as the mantle of the drifted snows,
Thy voice melodious with angelic grace.

But mayhap thou wast among us as the rose full blown;
And e'en had filled the measure of thy life,
Like some fair flower, e'er so quickly mown
One cannot see the reaper's shadowy knife.

Mayhap—but this at least we truly know—
Love, though 'tis fleeting, is not love in vain;
And where thou singest we shall strive to go,
And match life's losses with eternal gain.

TO A DEAD MASTER



Oh you, who lead our youth to nobler things
Than sordid gold and crumbling thrones of kings;
Who, through the mist, e'er kept the beacon bright,
Where Truth's tall temple towers pure and white;
Your pathway marked by many a martyr's tread,
With oft a crown of thorns upon your head;
So often smiling with your heart in tears;
So brave and patient through the long, lean years,
Hail and good night,
Bearer of the light!

You ne'er were guilty of the miser's vice
Like Socrates, you paid the martyr's price.
Like Him of Gallilee, you spurned their gold
To cast their manhood into nobler mold;
To lead them up from out the stupid vale,
Where ignorance listened to an old wife's tale
And idle fancy charmed a childlike ear,
And dormant genius licked the feet of fear.
Leal and brave as any knight of old,
The master cold.

And some time, when life's little day is done,
When from the glass the last golden grain has run,
I hope to greet you in that realm above,
Where Learning leans upon the breast of Love;
Where fadeless laurel crowns the patient brow,
So deeply furrowed by care's ceaseless plow,
And stars far brighter than imperial gems
Are woven in the teacher's diadems.
Blow breezes, gently blow, shine softly, sun;
The Master's crown is won.

IN PASSING



Take time to plant some roses as you go
Along life's highway, dull with grief and pain.
Some merry songster singing in the snow
Brings back the sunlit smile of spring again.

Take time to plant some lilies by the way;
The world is weary like a man grown old;
And many a pilgrim fain would pause to pray
Where stainless petals clasp a heart of gold.

Take time to plant some violets as you toil
In dusty plain or by the roaring sea;
For life is more than greed and gilded spoil,
And beauty sets the captive spirit free.

Take time to scatter sunbeams ere you leave;
For life is dark with many a brooding care;
And shadowed hearts somehow forget to grieve
When silvery laughter ripples everywhere.

For thorns and thistles ne'er provoked a smile:
The world grows weary of the clash of steel;
Let Love, the gardener, work a little while,
Lest, often fighting, men should cease to feel.



TO W. H. REDDISH



Dear friend, who gently fell asleep,
Nor yet had left the battle line,
Sweet be thy slumber, calm and deep;
May love's bright memory-blossoms keep
Its fragrant bloom
Above thy tomb—
Thou who art clothed with life and love divine.

Blow gently, Southern breeze, above his grave;
Shine softly, sun and moon and golden star;
He was so generous and so brave,
So full the cup of gladness that he gave;
So rich his gift:
The sunlight through the rift:
The quiet sea across the bar.

Flower Bells

TO A BOUQUET OF BLUE BELLS



Wee flowers from the Scottish hills,
Whence came my sires in olden days,
From that loved Ellens' Lake of lyric lays,
With stubborn courage in their wills.

I love you for the blue you flaunt—
The hue of hieland lass and lad—
The color stamped upon our plaid
Worn by a clan no man could daunt.

Nor yet, wee wanderers, would I boast,
Although the pibrochs pulse my blood,
When standing where our chieftain stood
I gaze upon that wild grim coast.

You are our bells of history;
I hear you where the centuries ring:
"God save good Robert Bruce, our King!"
Blue bells of Scotland—ah, let it be.

Bloom, bells, where once red Bannockburn
Called to my sires by Ellens' loch
And wild glens echoed to the shock;
We hold you in our hearts' red urn.

TO A CHINESE LILY



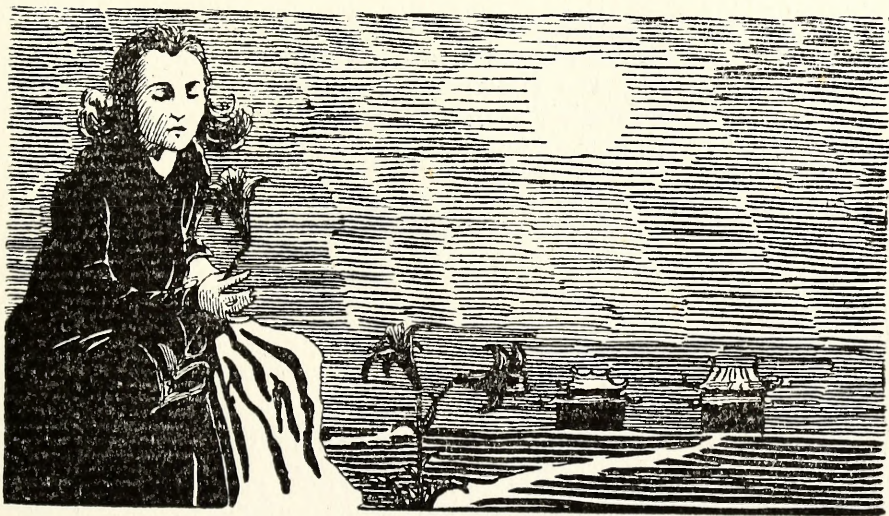
Blooming in beauty, so wondrous rare and wild,
Far from pagoda-shadowed pools of golden hue,
A flower from thy native soil exiled,
Fair one, I fain would pity you.

You lend such strange faint sweetness to the air—
The slumberous languor of the dreaming East—
I seem to see a maid with midnight hair
'Neath amber skies with drifting cloud rifts fleeced.

I seem to see a maid with almond eyes,
And teeth like pearls, bend o'er you very near,
Drink your aroma, pluck you as a prize,
And in her soft, strange language call you dear.

Sweet, faint-breathed lily from across the sea,
Why are you sad? Why droops so low your head?
You do not answer—but, ah me!
There are so many things that're never said.

So much of sorrow that one never tells,
The old strong yearning for one's native place;
The brooding stillness of the purple dells—
Alas, I see its ghost upon your face.



THE FLOWERS OF FAITH



Love's rose is born of rain and cloud,
As edelweiss is born of snow;
Faith's lilies bloom beneath the shroud,
And hope by Marah's flow.

Violets, mayhap, are angels' tears,
And daisies hearts of gold;
Lord, thine the bloom of bleeding years;
The flowers of our faith unfold.

Their petals stained with blood and grief,
Where fell the rain and mist,
When sorrow bound that thorny sheaf,
And Joy by Grief was kissed.

And yet they lift their lips to thee
In prayer not less though mute;
They bloom beside the singing sea;
The wild gale is their flute.

They open on the mountain heights
Beneath the silver cross of stars;
They are the synonyms of rights;
The crystalled ghosts of wars.

And yet they are ghosts that walk—
Pale lilies of the frost;
Roses that smile, poppies that talk—
Carnations of the cost!

TO A WATER LILY

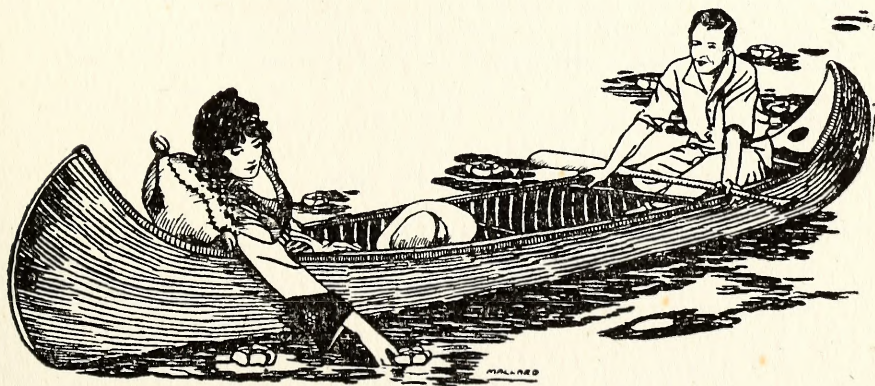


Bend low the lips of Morn
To kiss thy stainless face;
The ripples weave about thy neck
A rope of pearls.
Pure as a snow-drift
In thy silent grace,
Tossed gently by the eddy's
Silvery swirls.

Though Filth, a squalid beggar
Craves thy heart of gold,
He may not touch it
With his finger tips.
Thy petals hide it deeply,
Fold on fold,
Till morn unseals them
With his rosy lips.

A fairy slept within thy white tent yesternight,
The Princess o' Golden Dreams.
Her ships were anchored in thy harbor where,
Clear-beaconed by the Evening Star,
Night hovered o'er thee,
Clad in silver beams,
Whilst tiny gold fish watched thy jeweled bar.

Mayhap within thy fragile gold-lined cup
Sparkles the Olympian wine;
A magic potion tinged with rubied light—
Wreathed with lotus dreams,
O Lily, kept by some strange mystic spell divine
So pure and white!



THE EMERALD QUEEN



I. The White King

White was the wood where Winter's robe had lain
Low drooped the daisies that his sword had slain
Forsaken, tossed by every vagrant gale,
The empty nests told each its simple tale
Of song and sunshine, and the April rain.

The wood-brook lay within its crystal case;
I saw no lilies in that cold white place,
Save those of winter, petaled out with snow,
Too frail to pluck, too full of death to grow,
I heard the North Wind's requiem, weird and low.

Like some gaunt army stood the shivering trees,
Their armor pierced by many a warring breeze,
The wounded, marked by many a gleaming scar,
Stark and tall like a great naked spar,
And others slavish-low upon their knees.

(I heard a whisper in the North Wind's breath,
"All hail to Winter, the White King of Death!")

II. The Emerald Queen

Into the woodland came the Emerald Queen,
With silvery laughter, and a charm, I ween.
I marveled—was this wood the same
As that dead wood before she came?
Before her, Winter's spearmen ran;
And glimpsed I there the face of Pan,
His pipes the moment laid aside,
Where laughed the daisies, golden-eyed.

In every tree her silken robes were hung;
By every brook her choral songs were sung;
A thousand minstrels thrilled the balmy air;
And Love came forth with roses in her hair
To dance with Youth, as bonny, brave and true
'Midst violets with eyes of heavenly blue,
And all the trees, no longer mute,
Sang to the South Wind's golden lute.
(And in the wild birds' caroling;
"Hail to the Emerald Queen of Spring!")

THE LILY



(Dedicated to a Pure, Strong Woman)

The lily grows near the muddy bank,
Where the deadly breezes blow
But naught of the quagmire dark and dank
Stains her petals of snow.
The winds are laden with deathly fumes,
And the weapons of things that kill,
But ever the lily lives and blooms
In her splendid whiteness still.



THE FIRST VIOLET



Shy sprite of spring,
Behind the sheltering hill,
You seem to bring
The balm of April still.

It is not springtime yet,
Blue Eyes, I pray,
Sweet, shy Miss Violet,
Go away.

And yet, somehow, I would not have you go;
I hear the bluebirds twittering in the snow;
I prithee, then upon the winter smile,
Sweet blue-eyed harbinger of the afterwhile.

A GRECIAN VASE



Once I saw Diana with her horn
When, flinging her wild music to the morn,
In artful grace,
She sought the chase—
Upon a Grecian vase.

Once I heard the lute of Sappho sing
Till all the larks of joy were caroling;
And gardens fair
Were blooming there—
Upon a Grecian vase so rare.

Once I drank the beauty of a scene
In which Terpsichore danced upon the green;
And I saw her face
In a grottoed place—
Upon a Grecian vase.



INFINITY



Out of the dark a trembling star;
Blown from the sea a mist;
A whisper of night-wind tossed afar,
And a rose by the sunlight kissed.

Up from the earth a glimmering spark
Out of the sky a gleam:
The choirs of Heaven in the song of a lark,
And love in a maiden's dream.

Out of the filth a lily white;
Out of the winter spring;
Something that times the wild bird's flight
And a mock bird caroling.

Bells of Destiny



THE CURSE OF CAIN



He rose at morn, where stealthy shadows crept,
 Still as the tiger stalks its hapless prey,
 His dark eyes sunk, his tangled locks unkept,
 His furtive glance a wild thing's brought to bay.
 He shrank and shivered, peering here and there,
 Afraid of voices mocking in the mist:
 "Cain! Cain! Cain, oh where
 Is he thou graspt so roughly by the wrist?"

And every stone blazed up in withering heat;
 The dew-wet grasses found accusing tongue:
 A flock, unshepherded, with plaintive bleat—
 A note so strange when earth's fair morn was young—
 Sought out his covert, rang to Heaven his guilt.
 A raven croaked above him in mid air;
 The earth's red mouth, where Abel's blood was spilt
 Cried unto God along night's jeweled stair.

The morn grew old, the sun, a wheel of flame,
 Rolled up to Heaven from the purple east,
 The voice Almighty spoke aloud his name
 And Cain came cowering like a frightened beast—
 Half-mad, he came, his dry lips muttering lies,
 Clutching at phantom hopes, and stung by fears,
 Drawn ever nearer by the magic eyes,
 His heart a stone too deep and dense for tears.

"Where is thy brother, Abel? Answer Cain!
 Why doth his flock refuse to eat its fill?
 What is the meaning of this fresh red stain?
 Why mourns thy mother by yon new-made hill?"

* * * * *

"Am I my brother's keeper?" 'Twas the first
 Poor subterfuge to cover blood's deep cry,
 The shuddering gasp of one by earth accurst;
 The first evasion that was half a lie.

* * * * *

"Thou art thy brother's keeper. Silence! Cain;
 No more the earth shall bless thee with her store;
 For thee no more the fields of golden grain
 Shall bourgeon out with largess as of yore."

"Shall I then wander as the vulture flies?
Shall night write out my guilt in gleaming gold
In every shining star? The moon's white rise

Be but a mocking mirror, clear and cold,
Wherein I see my face,
And needs must shrink
Into some shadowed place
And think and think and think?"

* * * * *

The hand Almighty placed a brand on Cain,
Deep in his visage burned the fatal mark;
Deep in his eyes He laid the scarlet stain,
And round his forehead wound the starless dark.
Thus, out into the ages swept he then,
To found the Empire of the Shining Skull.
And yet he sways a million fighting men,
Where war's grim presses glimmer red and full.

But it is time to have an end of Cain,
To found the kingdom of the swordless Peace;
To vow beside the nations' thousands slain
That war and all its horrid brood shall cease;
That ever hence the people shall be free,
Wearing no shackles forged by foolish kings,
Marching like men to loftier liberty,
No longer lashed like dumb and driven things.

Free to breathe the air that nature gives,
To drink the chalice of the morning sun;
The gift of God to every man that lives,
Though war's denied it since the world's begun;
Free to live and not to bleed and rot,
Heaped like swine within a reeking trench,
Numbered like cattle, covered and forgot,
Or bait for vulture, hovering to the stench.

Free to clasp their own to breasts that throb,
Warm with love and all that life may mean;
Songs and laughter where the women sob,
And happy children on the village green;
Free to labor, free to hope and dream,
At even when the twilight lamps are low.
An end to Cain! White peace's mellow beam,
Where war's wild trumpets and its bugles blow.

IMMORTAL MAN



What is this creature,
Formed of the soulless dust,
Dreaming forever of the infinite,
Fighting with Death,
Yet measuring the whirling stars,
Wingless but conquering
All the seas of space?

And shall he die,
This greater than the hills,
Riding with Victory on the bridled winds?
Shall this bright sun grow dim,
These eyes ne'er ope
To drink the beauty
Of Eternal Truth?

And what shall be the answer
To the things he asks,
His questions cleaving all eternity?
And who shall say his dreaming
Has been vain,
Lost in the ocean of the endless years?

"Not I," says Faith,
"Else why his deathless hope,
The way immortal of his ceaseless quest,
The cry within him
That no sound may still,
The voiceless yearning of his restless soul?"

"He holds no kinship with
The countless stars;
Dust are they, but more than dust
Is he;
The light within him leaps beyond
Their flame
To shine with splendor
When the seas are quenched.

"The form he loses
Is but loss to gain;
The roses fall, their fragrance
Lingers still;
And he shall gather stars,
As children lilies break,
To wreathe in garlands
When the worlds are dead."

THE GREAT MARATHON



Morn rose so fair from out the purple east;
Earth was a garden filled with golden fruit;
Youth was the guest of honor at a feast,
And every zephyr was an angel's lute.

The wine of magic was the morn-white dew;
The chalice a lily from the silver pool;
Life sent a kiss in every breeze that blew;
Spring spread a carpet filmy, green and cool.

And every brooklet murmured low and sweet;
Blue as the sea smiled down the arching sky;
Pan piped an anthem from the rippling wheat,
And many a meadow danced beneath the eye.

Petals of roses fell like April rain;
The woodland woke to hear the wildbird's call;
Youth's lips were scarlet with the woodgrape's stain
He paused to hear the jeweled dew-drops fall.

Like spray of crystal fell they at his feet,
And wrapped his figure in a sheen of light;
The wild doe, feeding, came nearer still to eat,
Where grew the lilies wet with brooding night.

For youth was then a part of wild free things,
Blood brother he to flower, fount and tree;
He found his raiment where the fountain flings
Its tinted foliage forth in mimicry.

In every dimpling pool he saw his face,
Fair as the roses with no piercing thorn;
Like some Greek runner, groomed for Olympic race,
His slim white fingers grasped a golden horn.

He blew his challenge long and clear and shrill,
Till silvery echoes wound through valleys far,
And, climbing slowly to the highest hill,
Awoke the sleepers in the morning star.

But naught of life would dare to run with Youth;
The river would not, nor the infant stream;
He stood unchallenged, till at length forsooth,
There came one horrid as a witch's dream.

"Pallida Mors accepts thy challenge, lad;
From his deep cavern in the icy sea
He heard the glory of thy music mad—
The white waves bore thy bugle call of glee."

Youth glanced at Death so shrunken, grim and pale
And lifting his lily drank deep of Life's red wine;
"Thine," said he, "is but an idle tale
I drown thy image in the light of mine."

And yet at last Youth found that he must run;
Death walked beside him on the golden way
He sat beside him when the day was done;
He lurked e'er near him like a beast of prey.

Thus hurled the challenge and the gauntlet thrown,
The runners sped away at shining noon,
Youth led, his speed a startled eagle flown,
And Death ran slowly, lest he win too soon.

Through crimson flowers and the long dim lane,
Where tangled vines oft checked his winged flight,
Youth led the way, and many a fresh red stain
Oft marked the trail with weird unholy light.

Into the jungle of the heavy years,
Dank with the poisoned mist of creeping things;
Through the river of the salted tears,
Mocked and goaded by a hundred stings.

Youth, that swift runner, went at rapid pace;
But close beside him ran the form of Death.
Tireless as the wintry winds that race
And scourge the woodland with their frozen breath.

Once Youth stumbled, fell and rose again;
Death crouched and waited, not yet overbold;
Youth felt the first deep thrust of mortal pain;
He ran less swiftly, like a man grown old.

* * * * *

Then Death came nearer mocked and bade him run;
And Youth turned backward with a bitter cry;
Quickly he saw—the last great race was won;
Naught was left him but to droop and die.

* * * * *

He closed his eyes; he touched the frozen brink;
Withered and old, he fain would creep and grope;
A golden lily beckoned him to drink—
And, lo, he found it full of deathless hope!

A VISION OF THE NIGHT



Long, long ago, ere yet the sun had crept
Above the trees where dark-winged Night had slept,
I watched the dim ghost-shadows slowly crawl
Amid the gargoyles of an ancient wall;
And, as I looked, I saw a maiden rare,
A band of gold about her dusky hair—
A radiant maid of olden Greece, methought
By some strange necromancy brought
To fill me with despair.

And long I watched with faint and trembling breath,
Where fell the moonbeams, misty-white with death,
That beauteous vision of the olden days
When Sappho tuned her harps to golden lays,
Till, free from fear, my heart breathed incense sweet,
And Love lay helpless at her bare white feet.
Her smile the sunburst of the April skies,
The languor of old Egypt in her eyes.

The moon hung low like a pale lake in the west,
Where a white heron stood with silver crest;
A gray mist, drifting in from out the sea,
Bore the strange vision nearer yet to me,
Till in the golden age of afterwhile
She led me captive with a wooing smile,
So rare and wondrous all the night grew fair,
And stars were daisies blooming in midair.

Long, long I gazed upon the vision there,
Half filled with hope and half with dark despair,
Until, as croons the south wind faint and low,
She murmured, "Love, ah, let us even go
Beyond the sunset and the evening star
Into the isles where Love's own lilies are,
Within the sea, girt with the dream-gold sand—
Come, Love of mine, why dost thou spurn my hand?
Wilt thou go with me into realms unknown,
The world forgot, thy heart's fond nestlings flown?
To dream and dream, and ne'er grow tired again,
Nor feel upon thy brow life's crown of pain?
Oh, answer quickly! for the night, far spent,
Ere long will sleep within morn's rosy tent;
And soon where yon day's shadows loom
A rose of morn will bud and bloom."

And then I answered, drunk with wine of dream,
"Yea, thou hast won me; launch a swift trireme;
And let us drift for all the endless years,
Beyond the headlands and the isle of tears;
For aye and aye upon a golden sea,
With ne'er a vision of the long-lost lea,
Where stars are buoys 'long the Milky Way,"
I bent to kiss the Vision—but 'twas day!

MORNING AND EVENTIDE



Fair fell the morn—
A gift in rose—
Come to adorn
Ere dark should close
Life's golden gate.

The even came apace—
A gift in gold—
A little space
To have and hold
Ere it should be too late.

So let them be, O Lord;
For we are thine,
Our hearts thy harp, each chord
Somehow divine—
And thou the master of our fate.



"DE SENECTUTE"



Let me grow old
With heart e'er fresh and young;
A spender still of youth's first splendid gold,
With ne'er a whit of love's warm kiss grown cold,
Nor e'er a bit of life's sweet song unsung.

Let me grow old
With softer music yet,
My life a story, told and told and told,
With something still more wondrous to unfold
Ere I forget.

Let me grow old
As ripens the yellowed wheat;
For youth hath been so bony, brave and bold,
Fain would I wrap its jewels fold on fold,
And lay them untarnished at the conqueror's feet.

Halcyon Bells

THE OLD SCHOOL SPRING

(Written upon a recent visit, after 30 years' absence, to the old spring at Troy, N. C., where the author first attended school.)



Old Spring, the memories hold me fast today;
I see a barefoot boy in thy clear deep;
A barefoot boy all flushed with heat and play,
Below the hill so rough and red and steep—
A barefoot boy brown with the summer's sun,
So joyous when the master's day is done.

Ah, how they come again with silent feet,
From out the years that swell Time's silent sea;
Old days long gone, old memories sad and sweet,
And I still gazing in the depths of thee!
Ah, 'twere but yesterday I came to drink,
And poise perspiring on thy mossy brink!

A moment gone I heard a long-hushed voice,
And linger truant to the master's call;
Thy babe, the brook, with pebbles white and choice,
Beguiles me to a silvery waterfall—
Old Spring, a long, long lane between us lies;
But something in a boy's heart never dies!

Old Spring, the long-gone days will come no more;
I see their phantoms in thy crystal fount;
But whispers come from some far golden shore,
When, as of old, I pause to make the count—
Old comrades of my youth, are you still here?
(Into thy depths—the tinkle of a tear.)

TO A LONE PINE TREE



Standing alone along a broad highway;
 Stately in thy grace;
 An emerald plume with which the four winds play—
 Last of a kingly race.

Like some tall Viking of the Norseland old;
 Tough-fibred, full alive;
 Fearing not summer's heat or winter's cold,
 Born to survive.

Once thy tall brothers stood in serried rank
 Till the axe's feverish thirst
 Struck swift within their golden heart and drank
 Deep as it durst.

But thou wast spared to stand for years alone
 Beside the Conqueror's way.
 At midnight I have often heard thee moan;
 And once I heard thee say:
 "Brothers of olden days, come back to me;
 For thee I deeply sigh;
 The years have brought me naught but misery;
 I yearn to die.

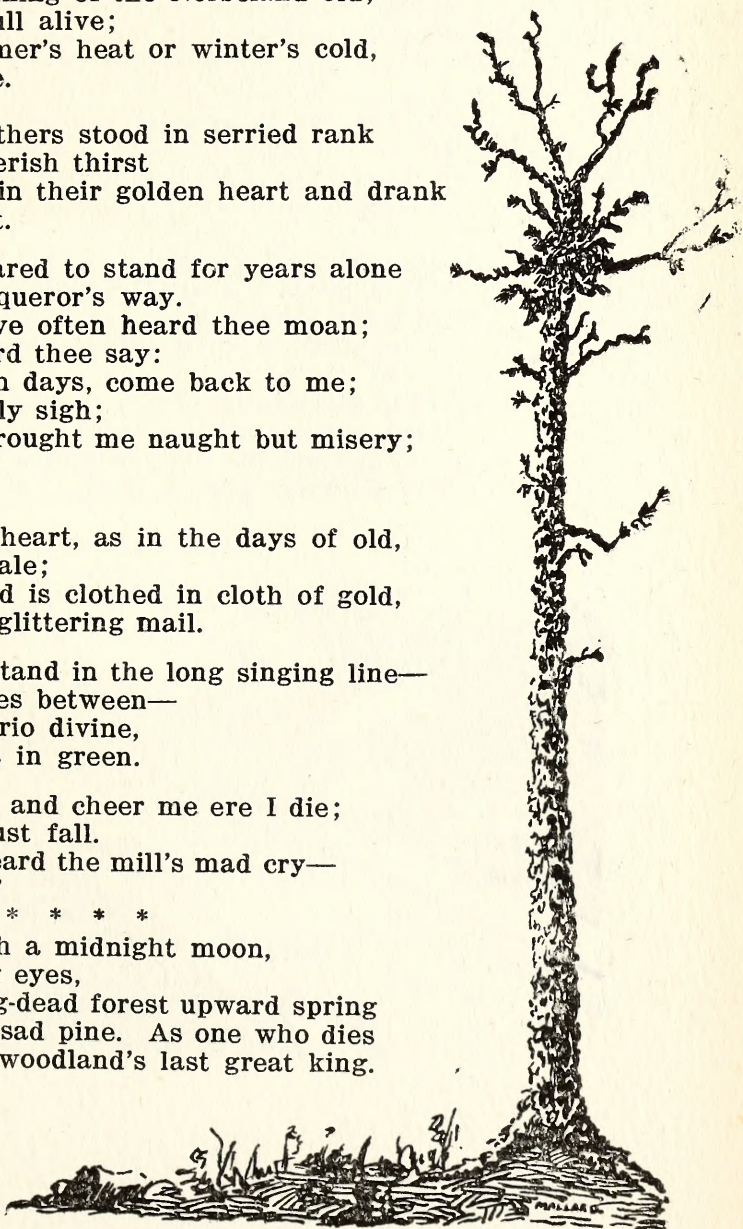
"Come cheer my heart, as in the days of old,
 Breasting the gale;
 When all the wood is clothed in cloth of gold,
 Or sheathed in glittering mail.

"Come back and stand in the long singing line—
 With lesser notes between—
 To chant in oratorio divine,
 God's choristers in green.

"Come once again and cheer me ere I die;
 Tomorrow I must fall.
 But yesterday I heard the mill's mad cry—
 Its frantic call."

* * * *

And there beneath a midnight moon,
 With wondering eyes,
 I watched the long-dead forest upward spring
 Beside the lone sad pine. As one who dies
 Saluted they the woodland's last great king.



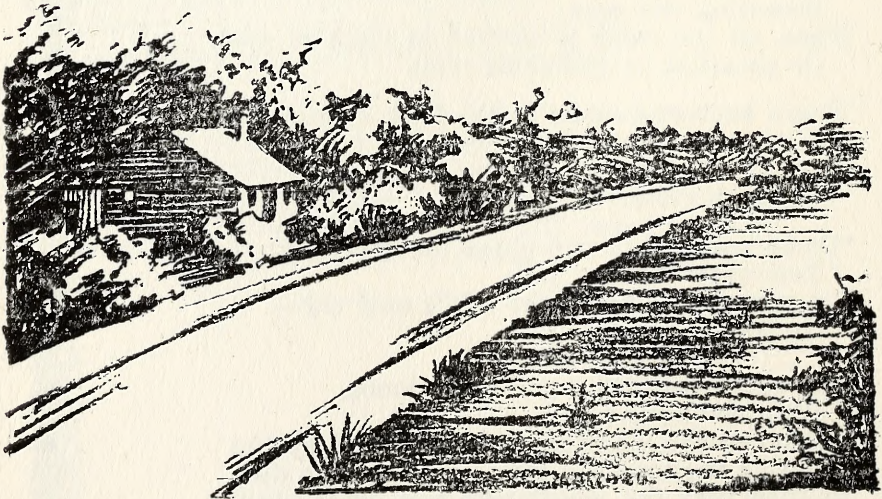
AN OLD ROAD



Untrod by human feet these hundred years,
A dim ghost trailing through the darkling wood:
Fragrant of romance—laughter light and tears;
A faint, pale relic of the days of blood.
Mayhap, along this tangled, shadow trail
Passed feet of youth, impatient at restraint,
To whisper in some ear love's old sweet tale;
Mayhap to come again with heart grown faint.
Here, too, the skin-clad settler, rifle-armed,
Hasted to obey his country's call,
His heart still in the cabin where, alarmed,
A woman watched him through the crude log wall.

Along this road the wild doe with her fawn
Fed unafraid beneath the moon's soft light,
Here made her lair when sombre gray-cowled dawn
Came stealing softly through the lanes of night.

Mayhap at midnight when the stars, grown pale,
Burn in the heavens with a dead white blaze,
Passes again along the age-dim trail,
The shadowy processional of other days.



TO THE GOLDEN HUED PEE DEE



A flame of glory in the dreaming west;
The flight of wild ducks toward the distant sea;
Night bending low with jewels in her breast,
And at my feet the golden-hued Pee Dee.

The stately cypress and the giant oak
Alike their silent watch unfailing keep,
And drifts like mist the woodland's thin blue smoke
Above the mounds where vanquished red men sleep.

His "Dee" of old the thrifty miller praised,
But ne'er in fancy's realm did he
See such a stream as they who gazed
Upon the Great Pee Dee.

Carolina's stream of rippling gold,
So regal, proud and free,
Whose bosom bore our sires of old,
What shall I say to thee!

Fresh from the far, blue western hills,
And reaching to the sea,
Thine every memory throbs and thrills
With glorious history.

Flow on, great river, to the east;
Born in the blue-ridged west;
For though I've loved none other least,
I still have loved thee best!

Upon thy banks my grandsires sleep;
Forgot Loch Lomond's charm.
Beside thy waters still and deep
Each tilled his humble farm.

The sons of those that died for Bruce
Near thee drove deep the plow,
When winter's white and frozen truce
Had lasted long enow.

And thou, loved river, still dost sing
The old, old songs to me;
To thee this simple gift I bring,
Sweet golden-hued Pee Dee.

FACE IN THE CLOUD



Face in the cloud,
I saw you smile at me;
Almost I heard you call my name aloud
Drifting, drifting in the high blue sea.
 Face of mist,
 White as snow;
 Sunbeam kissed,
 You charm me so!

Face in the cloud,
I saw you—oh—so plainly;
Cold, impassive and proud;
I sought you—oh—so vainly.
 Face of love,
 Fairer far
 In realms above,
 Than earth's own lilies are.
Face in the cloud,
Melting into the west
Where all the purple crowd
Of shadows seek to rest.
 Face of white,
 Carved like the stone;
 Sweet face of dreams, good night
 I watch and wait alone.



THE GOOD-BYE



The world grew darker when you said good-bye;
Somehow the sunlight faded from the sky;
And all the wild birds came to pity me
Just like, O Heart o' mine, I said 'twould be.

So like to tears, the April rain; memories, memories at my
 windowpane;
And every smile sank quickly to a sigh;
For you, O Heart o' mine, had said good-bye.

THE OLD AND THE NEW



I—The Old

Passes the old, a pilgrim bent and gray;
The end of him has come; he cannot stay;
Sometimes he brought us laughter; sometimes tears—
Hope's golden thread among the darkling fears.

Passes the old—ah, I would press one kiss
Upon his white and wrinkled brow for this:
He taught me much of beauty by the thorn;
My soul was chastened ere the rose was born.

To soothe with sunbeams every heart of pain,
To hear the birdsongs in the dull gray rain;
To see the violets on the breast of snow—
Ah, olden year, how can I let thee go?

II—The New

Comes the new, a smiling youth and bright,
His eyes agleam with morn's fair, roseate light.
So much of beauty with ne'er a line of care,
And ne'er a thread of silver in his hair.

Comes in the new—ah, I would love him, too,
So young and gay, a cavalier of cheer;
I heard his voice in every breeze that blew,
Ere fell asleep the old and whitened year.

Hail, merry comrade, come and ride with me,
Where pipe the minstrel winds with mirthsome glee;
Full many a golden coin we'll toss to Joy
Ere thou shalt go thy ways, sweet smiling boy.

NEW YEAR'S NIGHT



Ring out the great bells strong and clear
To usher in the glad New Year;
Let all the listening silence hear!

The notes of joy, the peals so deep
That waken all the worlds of sleep—
Let us the tryst of midnight keep.

Ring out the sweet-toned silvery bells
With joy so vibrant in their swells
As toll afar the Old Year's knells.

The echo over hill and dale
Repeats the winter's wondrous tale;
The New Year's voice is in the gale!

A note of buoyant hope and cheer,
Despite the winter gray and drear.
We greet the new and radiant Year!

JANUS, GOD OF THE GATE



Old Janus, two faced god of door and gate,
Upon thy smile old Rome was wont to wait;
With thee the future and the buried past;
Thy greeting first; thy sad good-bye the last.

To thee Rome brought her favored household lares;
And at thy feet she poured her urn of prayers
For signs propitious to her warring arms,
Old Janus, gate god of the dual charms!

The face that e'er looked backward would not tell;
The face that saw the future augured well;
Old Rome well named thee Janus of the gate,
Rome of the lares and much revered penate!

We call thee January by the rule
Of Kalends learned in Caesar's classic school;
But thou art yet at time's unresting gate,
And on thy smile the teeming millions wait.

AUTUMN TWILIGHT



A gleam of gold, the amber-colored mead;
A hint of winter in the evening air;
Pan calling softly on his plaintive reed;
And night astir along her jeweled stair.

The rhythmic ripple of a wine hued brook;
The autumn forest draped in cloth of gold;
The stooping day, with pipe and shepherd's crook,
To herd the sunbeams in night's dusky fold.

The sheen of dew drops on the glistening road;
The West aflame with scarlet after glow;
A kiss of peace by night's soft lips bestowed,
And one sweet lute call where the four winds blow.

The hush of bird-calls in the dappled grove;
The fall of nuts; the plash of falling leaves;
A ship at anchor in a purple cove,
The day's bright hours bound in golden sheaves.



SUNSET IN THE SOUTH



A light like wine athwart the amber West;
A veil of purple o'er the darkling trees;
One silver star agleam above the crest,
And old, old memories whispering in the breeze.

The sound of herd-bells tinkling faint and far;
A stain of scarlet on the shadowed stream;
Night's dark-haired shepherd at day's golden bar;
The young moon sailing like a lone trireme.

The mockbird's vesper like a ghost of song;
The moon's white magic in each scented nook;
The dark a maid to dance in festal throng,
To glow with gems, to dazzle with a look.

Miscellaneous Bells

TO WOMAN



O Woman, Sister, counterpart of man,
Knowing so well his weakness and his strength,
Thou hast been faithful since the race began;
And where he marched thy shadow cast its length:
Tall as the Alpines, white as the drifted snow,
Beside him there I watch you as you go,
Lifting the race to nobler, better things
Than all the empires of the earth's proud kings;
Content to wear with him a crown of thorn,
Proud as a princess with thy babe new-born.

I know full well the tale that history tells
Of the Gracchi's mother and the gentle Ruth;
I hear it ringing in the ocean's swells,
Immortal echoes of immortal truth;
Of her of Arc, Domremy's martyred child,
True to the voices, by no greed beguiled;
Of many a virgin in the scarlet line,
Upon each brow a halo half divine—
O Woman, Sister, what then shall I place,
Thou noble mother of a noble race!

O Woman, Sister, what then shall I say
To thee whose soul I can not understand;
And who may walk with thee along that sacred way!
Ah, it were glorious but to touch thy hand.
So soft, so gentle, so prone to smiles and tears,
The grace of strength, the gold of pillared might,
The one clear beacon in the starless night;
The one ne'er failing through the long dark years
O Woman, Sister, let it ne'er be said
That thou, made sordid, to the race art dead!

Nay, I would not have thee a mere dainty doll,
Lost to the strong man in his hour of need;
And yet I laugh not at thy fol-de-rol,
The little things far better than the greed
Of sordid masters in the marts of men;
Thou seest things beyond the wise men's ken;
Thy Maker long ago gave unto thee
Deep intuition's magic key;
The power to thrill to music man's stern soul;
Thou art the flute call; he the drum's deep roll.

And if, O Sister, in thy God made place
It seem to thee the years fall dull and dead;
It was His birth that gave thy sex its grace
And poured the holy incense on thy head;
If then, without thee, man's poor life is marred,
What then to thee if all the world were won?
What then to him if all the night were starred,
If love at last should lose its shining sun!



THE WOMAN



I see her standing near the field of blood,
The tragedy of centuries in her pose;
White as marble whilst the scarlet flood
Into the ocean of the ages flows.

She stands, the anguish of ages at her breast;
Wrapped deep in silence too profound for speech;
And at her feet the babe her arms caressed,
Grim and bloody by a broken cannon's breech.

The night comes down, swiftly, like wings;
But 'neath the stars her silent vigil keeps;
The woman who knows no lust of kings,
Who watches there and weeps.

But some day to come when this grim tide shall roll,
Flung high with that she snatched from death,
Too heavy on her soul,
Then she shall curse the world with withering
breath.

For who of men recks yet the price she paid
Treading the valley of the soul's twilight?
Calm-eyed, clear-visioned, unafraid,
Along the border of the dreamless night.

And she alone, the watcher of the field,
Can count the cost of such a thing as this,
She whose mission is to suffer and to yield,
To flirt with death, to dally at a kiss.

HUMAN NATURE



Oh, I wush dat dinnah bell 'ud ring;
I's des so t'ard, I cain't ha'f sing,
Much less cut de piginwhing.

An' dese ole cawn rows bees so long
Dey keeps me sayin' sumpun wrong,
W'en I orter be singin' er Sundry song!

De preecher neddun 'mence lecturin' me—
Sayin', "Rastus yo's mean ez yo kin be"—
Twell he walks berhin' dis swingletree!

Whin he gits de plow punch in de ribs
He gwiner say sumpun sho' 's he libs—
Er sumbody gwiner be tellin' fibs!

Gee-har, dere! Drat ye! Betsy Ann!
I ain't no rigulur cussin' man—
An' I'll be des es modes' ez I can—

But yo's des nach'lly de bigges' fool
I ebber seed wrapped in de hide uv a mule—
Gwan dere, blame yo—lemme cool!

ART AND NATURE



The Lord He made the country,
And man he made the town;
Green hills and shining valleys;
The city's roar and frown;
The wildwood wet with dew drops;
The shout of many throats;
Buttercups and daisies;
The factory's night-long notes.

The Lord He made the country,
And man he made the town;
The gold of autumn apples;
Great buildings looking down;
The meadow green as emerald;
Death crouching in the street;
Springs sparkling by the wayside;
The tramp of many feet.

The Lord He made the country,
And man he made the town;
The scent of budding hawthorn,
The buffoon and the clown;
The long, long seas of cotton;
Revelry and mirth;
The bird calls in the orchard,
And the gilded gods of earth.

The Lord He made the country,
And man he made the town;
The ripple of the river;
Long streets sere and brown;
The carol of the mock-bird;
The wide fields red at dawn;
The pale white ghost of summer;
And labor's deep, deep yawn.

THE FOUR WINDS



I—The North Wind

Bold as a lion, came he forth,
Boreas, the bitter wind of the North;
And the trees of the Autumn wailed and wept
In the darkling wold where the brown deer slept;
And the rivers bore to the blue, blue sea
The dirge of a mournful minstrelsy.
Through the tangled wild rose his witch-like croon
Like the lonesome cry of a startled loon,
Till in the ocean, vast and deep,
He crept at morn and fell asleep—
A purring tiger, crouching low
Where the lamb-like tidelets ebb and flow,
Waiting, waiting to make his spring
Where the booming breakers flash and fling
Their white heels heavenward, tossing high
Their foamy manes toward the blackened sky.

II—The South Wind

A wondrous maid from the balmy South
With a golden flute to her pearly mouth;
A maid of the softest azure skies
With old, old love in her laughing eyes;
And she sang to the notes of the rustling corn
And the silver lutes of the rose-red morn—
Terpsichore of dance and song
Where nymph and sprite and festal throng
Foregather 'neath an amber moon
To pipe the lays of the fragrant June.

III—The East Wind

A bugler-boy blew from the East
A call to the young Day's jocund feast
Where bloomed and blushed morn's first faint rose,
In a garden near where the blue sea flows—
A long, full note with a peal so clear
That it fell afar on Pan's keen ear,
And he answered back with silvery reed
From Leafy copse and daisied mead,
Till all the woodland throbbed with song,
And Joy went wild a May day long.

IV—The West Wind

A trooper rode toward the golden West
With an eagle perched on his helmet's crest,
And flashed his lance like a golden beam
Till twilight flowed in a purple stream,
And the ring of his challenge loud and clear
Followed the flight of his gleaming spear.
Never a knight so brave as he
Never a lord so bold and free;
He drove his spear through the Ocean's breast,
And red is the hue of the far-flung West;
And ever and ever the trooper rides
O'er the hill and the wood and the ocean tides.



THE BLUE HILLS OF ANSON



Blue hills that guard the golden west
Where twilight's tapers burn—
One star agleam above the crest,
And summer's scented urn.

Blue hills uplifted like the sea
By God's almighty hand:
(Starlight—the moon's white wizardry)
Majestic, tall and grand.

Blue hills: romance and poetry
You seem for aye to keep;
Blue hills that wait for victory
Across the pulsing deep.

I love you when the loom of morn
Weaves wondrous silvery lace;
And sunset's golden crowns adorn
Your brows with gleaming grace.

I love you when the lips of noon
Drink deep the chalice dew;
Harp-strung, you catch the south wind's croon.
And steal the sky's deep blue!

MIDSUMMER MAGIC



Along the east a string of roselit pearls;
Violets peeping forth with eyes deep blue;
A lane of silver where Day's chariot whirls;
And every mountain tipped with scarlet hue.

The kiss of morn upon the cool-limbed earth;
The voice of birds astir at early dawn;
The river rippling in its rhythmic mirth;
Deep woodland reaches dappled as a fawn.

The lyres of fancy quivering in each breeze,
Fragrant gardens glittering like a lake;
The mellow murmur of the whispering trees,
A blackbird calling from the reedy brake.

Castles shimmering in the dimpling pool,
Knights in armor, maids of long ago;
The shout of children free at last from school,
The cool, sweet silence where the lilies grow.

The dancing woodland, garbed in emerald silk,
The shining meadows and the tinkling bells;
Gleaming buckets filled with snowy milk;
The milkmaid's song amid the dewey dells.

The gladsome music of the rustling corn,
The rows of cotton like a seagreen strand;
Midsummer's bugler, blow your golden horn,
For earth's glad army 'waits your first command.

TO A VAGRANT WATERFOWL



When summer twilight steals from out the West,
And earth's soft vespers rise from scented urns,
I wait and watch thee wing thy way to rest,
Beyond the pines where evening's taper burns.

With thee no dole of pain and weighting care;
No sorrow that thy wings can not outspeed;
The joy of life beguiles thee everywhere,
And bounteous nature meets thy modest need.

The lake is troubled by the tempest's wrath;
The tree is shaken by the passing breeze;
But thou canst rise, thy strong wing hath
Wherewith to mock the might of angry seas.

To thee no terror in the stormcloud's rage;
Above the lightning's sword of flashing flame;
Thy gaze is fixed upon the night's grand page
Where jeweled letters spell the ONE GREAT NAME.

How knowest thou when changing seasons call
To stir thy blood with strange unresting fires?
Who badest thee to break the North's white thrall
To let the South be chief of thy desires?

They tell us it is nature—what is that?
Whence came this spirit with her magic wand?
Who teaches thee to change thy habitat,
And sever e'en the South's seductive bond?

If back of thee is Nature, back of Nature what?
Why the higher flight of wildfowl, and the lower ways
I've trod?

One skeptic answers nay; another answers not—
Thou answerest, "Back of me is Nature, and back of
Nature God."

TO THE GODDESS OF THE GREAT OUT- DOORS



Fresh rose the morn
Where glowed the dawn's faint fires;
The Spirit of Spring with golden horn
Awoke to music winter's frozen lyres;
And thou didst rise,
The music in thine eyes,
Surpassing all the song of earthly choirs!

The wine of Youth stained thy soft lips the while;
Thy hair a nimbus of all glorious light;
A Rajah's pearls gleamed ne'er so radiant as thy
smile;
Thine eyes paled all the jewels of the night;
And when from morn's scented urn of damask rose
The rippling current of thy laughter flows,
Life's shadows vanish swiftly, mile on mile.

Once I saw thy image in a dimpling pool,
Nearby a meadow starred with daisies gold,
And Nature's face was soft and kind and cool,
And fair young zephyrs kissed the purple mould—
The mingled hues of all fair morns thy face,
The melody of all sweet songs thy grace;
Beside thee there all other joys grew old.

I saw thee too, amid the leaf-strewn ways,
The shadow of an old regret within thine eyes,
Thy minstrel harp attuned to mournful lays,
Whilst Autumn's tears fell softly from the skies;
Yet in the vine-wreathed chalice of thy grief,
My shadowed spirit somehow found relief,
And lost its sorrow in thy plaintive sighs.

INDIAN SUMMER MAGIC



Mayhap Midsummer's flute call,
Soft and sweet and slow,
Lingers yet somewhere
In the South wind's tremolo,
When all the fields are yellow with the goldenrod,
And all the air is mellow with the pipes of God.

A hazy blue smiles in the arching sky;
A silvery ripple gleams upon each stream;
The green and gold still in the forest vie
And Nature dreams her sweet old Indian dream.

Passion of bird calls everywhere;
A hint of sadness in the twilight air,
Autumn's arrows waiting, silver-tipped
Where Summer lingers yet so rosy-lipped

A plume of faint blue smoke against the west;
And pine trees stretching onward like an emerald sea;
Wild things creeping close to Nature's breast;
The north wind faring forth in minstrelsy.

Stars a-glitter like a rope of pearls;
A thousand jewels where Arcturus whirls;
The sleepy fields close hovered by the night,
And Indian Summer painted ghostly white.

So strangely silent in her silvery shroud
The Indian maiden chants no more aloud
To wake the echoes of the sunlit land,
On every hill the White Chief's wigwams stand.

THE FISHING FEVER



Souf win' tawkin' sweet an' sof',
 "Honey-Gal, Honey-Gal"—
 Buster, clim' up in de lof'—
Fech ma umberak.

Yo' cain't trus dat souf' win' chile;
 "Shoo-li-loo, shoo-li-loo;"
But I'se gwiner gib dem cats er trile,
 Ef I gits wet clar thoo.

I'll h'ist dat brella high I will;
 Lizer Jane, Lizer Jane;
An' den de clouds kin drap dey fill
 Ub dat April rain.

De Pahsun sometime gibs me fits—
 Lisun, well, lisun well;
He sez, "Yo's 's chompin' de Debble's bits;
 Better heed dat meetin' bell."

But de meetin' hit kin run dout me;
 Easy dar, easy dar;
I'se bound' ter tek ma catfish spree
 Doun' at "Goose Creek bar."

HARBOR LIGHTS



Clear eyes twinkling through the night—
Beacons flung afar;
And it's ho for the merry harbor light
Agleam across the bar.

Bright eyes bidding hope and cheer,
Laughing all the while;
The night sea's never half so drear
When the home-lights smile.

Soft eyes watching o'er the sea,
A-wishing merry weather;
Sailor lad, come back to me,
And let us sing together.

Blue eyes wait where brown eyes shine,
Lad o' the sea unresting;
And youth must drink the red, red wine,
And age will do the testing.

Blue eyes look through the window pane,
Scanning the dark sea over;
Hark ye, now, bold sailor swain;
Mark ye, old sea-rover.

Black eyes blur at the harbor gate,
Watching the sad sea ever;
Tired eyes that wait and wait,
And will wait on forever.

And mind ye, too, the eyes of gray
So full of silent sorrow;
Watching, waiting, night and day,
For the ship that comes "to-morrow."

These be the harbor lights that gleam
All the dark night through;
Lights that burn and eyes that dream,
Alike to the sea-watch true.

MOTHER



When all the children's prayers is said,
An' most everybody's gone to bed
 Exceptin' my big brother,
An' I can't sleep a single bit
Because my head's about to split,
Who comes to rub an' poultice it?
 Why, can't you guess? It's mother.

Once when I climbed the apple tree,
An' somehow fell an' hurt my knee,
 First one an' then another
Jest said, "Oh, well, I told you so,
You just won't let them apples grow;
Why weren't you weedin' with the hoe?"
 Yes, everyone but mother.

I jest don't know why she's so good,
And how she's stood all that she's stood—
 This an' that an' the other;
The folks all say I'm orful bad,
(Sometimes it sorter makes me sad)
I'm oft on spankin' terms with dad—
 But I'm dead in love with mother.

THE CONQUERING OF WINTER



Fair Spring came softly, like Shiloah's stream,
With violets clustered in her radiant hair;
The voice of wild birds woke love's old sweet dream,
And Nature's visage lost its dark despair.

I heard once more the call of woodland ways,
Where purple lilies drank the moon's new wine—
Yon where so lightly tripped the nymphs and fays,
And hope, fair harpist, sang her song divine.

For winter was so bitter and so cold:
White to the lips, he gave each stern command;
The North Wind, like a trooper, leal and bold,
Led through the wood his wild and screaming band.

But 'neath the snow-robe one wee violet slept—
A fragile babe yet warm with germant hope;
It was the earnest of the tryst Spring kept:
All Spring shone there beneath God's microscope.

And then one morn all Nature burst abloom;
Soft fleecy cloudships drifted in the sky;
No more I heard the Winter's mournful loom;
No more the witch Wind drooned its low, weird cry.

Where Autumn's colors, scarlet hued and gold,
Stained for the loom that long and flaming thread,
When Summer's roses lay so white and cold,
And each sweet songster from its nest had fled.

But Spring marched on, with her the festal throng:
A thousand flutes awakened wood and field,
A thousand voices broke in silvery song;
Her smile won victory and he needs must yield.

MIDSUMMER



I saw her coming through a scented lane,
Upon her lips the wild grape's scarlet stain;
In her eyes the light of dreaming noon,
Her white feet dancing to the South wind's croon.

I saw her where the dappled shadows fall,
In leafy coverts where the wild birds call,
When misty-white the wraith of evening springs
From brook and wold on filmy floating wings.

I saw her when the mockbird's low sweet note
Poured golden music from her lyric throat:
And in her hands I glimpsed the Lesbian lute,
And neath her voice the singing winds grew mute.
I saw her sit beside the deep blue sea
Like Ariadne. From the purple lea
Old loves, old joys, and olden memories came;
And these she burned in Autumn's scarlet flame.



THE OLD ISSUE VS. THE NEW



Ole marse Winter cum stompin' eroun',
Scatterin' sleet an' snow,
An' yo daddy des shiverin' lak er houn'—
Efum, shet dat do'!

Shet dat do' an' shet yo' mouf;
Do'n' 'mence yo' collige sass,
Er dere'll be wun yaller nigger souf
In yo' daddy's cowskin class!

Ole marse Winter he got col' feets—
Wantuh set heah by de f'ar;
But I's got er conah on cabin heats,
Ef he is er big seeggar!

Den shet dat do'! I'se tol' yo' twice:
I don't need no fresh air;
I'se col' rite now ez er hawg on ice
An' de drinks at de county fair.

THE RULING PASSION



De Creek
Hit speak:
"Sish-wah-si-wish;
Wush dat nigger'd
Cum an' fish."

Ole Brer Catfish lyin' low,
An' I des dyin' fer ter go.
I keeps ahearin' him say,
"Swish-swish—"
Why do'n Efum cum
An' fish?
I's des a-lanwishin' wid dis hoe.
Cum heah, chillun, I's gwiner go!
Tell yo' Mammy ter put on de pan;
(I ain't no rig'lar wukin' 'man;)

I's boun fer ter have sum exuhcise
Dere'll be niggers here w'en yo Daddy dies;
But chillun, chillun, I des dunno
Whur dere'll be any cats on de tudder sho'.



OLD HICKORY DAYS



The good ole days 'av done gone by,—
The swimmin' hole, bird-traps an' sich;
It brings a moischure tew my eye
Tew think thet days like them could die.
Ef I could call 'em back, I'd try—
An' Maw with her long hic'ry switch.

An' I would'n mind any switch she had
Ef all my keers wuz whupped away,
(Although I caught one ev'ry day),
Trubble then wuz short tew stay,
An' I wuz glad tew hear her say:
"Now, Bud, hit hurt me twict ez bad".

But now, doggone it, keers has come
Tew say I'm grown an' they will light—
An' I ain't got much appertite
Sometimes tew keep on in the fight;
But Maw's old hick'ry keeps me right—
An' I'm a lad ag'in at hum

An', oh, I wush Maw could cum back,
An' fetch that hick'ry switch with her
Tew jist prenach'lly tan my fur
Twell I could beat a cuckleburrr
A-growin' grit an' hustle-stir
Along life's dim an' dusty track.

A MILYUNAIRE



Oh, ma heat 's plum full uv sengin',
An' ma soul 's chock full uv rime,
Kaze dese summer days is brengin'
Good ole watermilyun time.

Adum stole de seed f'um Eden—
Hit uz dat ferbitten froot,
Kaze dere 's follerin' whar hit 's leadin',
Ef yo bre'ks yo' neck ter boot.

Jis' er li'l ball uv sweetness,
Red an' joocy ter de rin',
Better in hits full completeness
Dan de w'uks uv all mankin'.

Don't tawk erbout yo' 'simmon beer,
An' brag erbout yo' wine!
De fines' drink I'se tackled here
Grows on de milyun vine.

Des draps hits joocy sweetness doun
An' I gits hit in ma years;
Hit meks me tek ma banger roun'
W'en de festibul appears.
I'se 'siderate den wid Kickin' Jim
(Dat 'ceitful, triflin' mule!)
I 'vides he out'ud rin' wid him
Des like er librul fool.

Now de pahsun, he 's a preachin' man.
An' he meks de rafter ring,
But he can't hol' no sorter han'
W'en de milyun teks er fling.

Kase hit's milyun dis an' milyun dat
A-runnin' all de fairs;
An' I'se des nachully tuck ma hat
An' jine de milyunaires.

An' w'en I leabes dis vale uv tears,
Des treat dis nigger fair;
An' say wid shouts an' j'iyous cheers
"Here lies er milyunaire."

LITTLE SUNDAY



Dis nigger do'n w'uk on Satur-day—
 No suh, nohsuhree!
 Kase all-week w'uk 'dout no play
 Hit do'n ergree wid me.

Satur-day 's Li'l Sunday sho';
 Big Sunday hit cum too;
 De one's de heel an' tudder's de toe—
 Huh! dat ain't nuthin' new.

Satur-days I des sets doun,
 I's soht uv er cullud Jew;
 An' I's pow'ful glad w'en hit roll 'roun'
 An I jines de restin crew.
 Ole 'omun she des drives ter town
 Ter buy sum calico;
 But yo' uncle Ef'um des' mose eroun'
 Kase hit's Li'l Sunday sho.



CAMOUFLAGE



Oh, how's I evah gwiner git dat tu'key!
 Ma nuvs dey acts so quare an' juky—
 Shoo—li' tu'key, do'n watch me;
 I'se des er dahk shadder 'hin' dis tree.

An', oh! I hopes dis gun do'n' miss!
 Dat tu'key sho' would fotch us bliss—
 Ah'll ax de pahsun home ter tea;
 No, I wo'n' be nuvus—dis am me!

Oh, why did dat wil' tu'key fly!
 At sum tame tu'key ah'll hatter try;
 I 'low we'll hatter eat whiteside;
 I would er got him—but he flied!

THE BLUNDERER



I heerd yo' stirin' 'fo' de peep uv day,
W'en dat fus' rooster crowed;
Yo' thot yo's gwiner slip erway
Befo' yo' Daddy knowed;
But I seed yo' w'en yo' raised de latch,
An' started towuds dat milyun patch—
Yo' heah me Danyul Webstuh Rastus Henry Clay!

I seed yo' plug dat biggis' un
Befo' 'de sun 'uz up;
An' I is' shame dat my own son
Am sich er triflin' rogueish pup;
I seed yo' pull dat Gawja Sweet
An' hide hit in de grass;
An' yo' needun 'mence ter swing yo' feet,
Ner gim me eny sass.

Yo' des ain't got no nachul sense;
Why do'n yo' be mo' sof'?
I lay dar in de jam uv de fence,
An' heerd yo' sneeze an' cough;
Yo' 's gwine ter de chaingang
Whut yo is
Ef yo' do'n larn his milyun biz.

Yo've gotter leave no signs eroun'
(Better copy ole Brer Fox)
You's boun' fer ter know de lay uv de groun'—
Whar's de stumps an' whar de rocks;
An' den yo' mimucks de sof' foot habit
By studyin' de skemes uv ole Brer Rabbit;
Do'n plug no milyuns in de fiel';
An' kiver your tracks f'um toe ter he-l.

Hit ain't de milyun dat I needs;
(Dere's plenty uv 'em fer all),
But hit's ye trail, suh, thoo dese weeds
Dat nachully cry an' call,
Er—sayin' "Heah de rascal went
Whut w'uked dis roguish devulment!"
I nachully hates ter see er botch—
I blames yo' suh, fer gittin' kotch!

A LYRIC TO SPRING



Blithely we hail thy coming, gentle Spring,
Here in the orchard where the wild birds sing
I saw thee—glimpsed the color of thine eyes
In the soft splendor of the azure skies.

I heard thy challenge in the bubbling stream,
Aroused at last from Winter's frozen dream,
To bear the beauty and the balm of thee
In murmuring music to the shining sea.

I saw thee loitering 'mid the darkling trees
That stood so long, snow-girded to the knees;
I heard thee whisper low some magic charm,
And all the wood grew quickly bright and warm.

Rich robes of velvet clothed the woodland bare,
And every field wore violets in its hair—
Ah, fair enchantress, rare and radiant Spring,
Sweet Prima Donna, start thy caroling!

UNCLE EFUM ON THE NORTHERN MIGRATION



Yo' Unkel Efum, he mus' decline
Ter cross dat Masum an' Dixum line;
He's gwiner stay neer—
Ole 'simmon beer—
 An' 'possum—
Nigger! do'n yo' heer?

Dey may have money by de leg;
But I ain' gwiner tote no powder keg;
Ain' gwiner tote no dinnermite key;
De South 'sho good ernuf fo' me!

Gwiner stay where de sweet 'taters grow;
Ain' gwiner lissun fer de train ter blow;
Ain' gwiner cum home in no box—
Gwiner stay heer an' plow dat ox!

Possums plenty in dese woods;
An' ole Ring dere, he gits de goods;
Got sum 'taters in dat fiel—
(Des lissun ter dat pohker squeal!)

G'way frum me, nigger! I'se got good sense;
I trustes de South an' Providence;
Ain' gwiner w'uk in er powder house;
Gwiner raise sassige meat an' souse!

THE BELLS OF PEACE



Oh, ring them free and far and wide
Until they throb in every tide—
Until they peal from every height
In measures of the Nation's might:
Ring, Bells of Peace, through the long night!

This night of war the nations brought;
This deep unrest the sword hath wrought:
Ring in the reign of holier years;
Ring sunlight through the Nations' tears,
To thrill the heart of hemispheres!

Ring in the years of faith and love,
When cannon's mouths shall nest the dove;
Ring in the rule of truer things,
When manhood's worth supplants the kings.
Beneath Columbia's widening wings,

Ring, Bells, ring in a nobler time;
Ring health and hope in every chime;
Invade the tyrants' ancient seat,
Drive hatred from his strong retreat:
Ring till Time's cycle is complete!

Ring, Bells! Our martyred dead—they come,
White ranked to answer Freedom's drum;
From reddened fields of France they rise
With deathless courage in their eyes—
They come—the Nation's sacrifice.

Ring, Bells! This Nation e'er was free
From cliff and scaur to shining sea;
Ring where the tossing tides are whirled;
Ring where the sanguine spear is hurled—
Ring in the New Birth of the World!

TO ARGYLE PLACE



Sweet Argyle Place, where joys are ever new,
How oft my memory seeks the shrine of you,
Where softly sings the mock-bird all day long,
And night falls gently to the lilt of song.

Historic interest clings to your old trees,
The balm of woodland flowers scents the breeze;
Sweetest of all the welcomes that you give,
With you the golden days of old still live.

With thrilling joy I see your open door,
When, weary oft, I seek your halls once more;
Harp of the South, awake to joyous lay,
To love you once is but to love for aye!

May Heaven's blessings crown your gracious board,
May all you rooms with gifts of wealth be stored,
The gold of love; the gems that grow not dim,
Your cup of gladness sparkling to the brim!

Argyle, July 1st, 1918.



THE GODDESS OF SPRING



I saw thy image in a crystal brook,
The languor of fair noons within thine eyes,
When lyric carols in each scented nook
Recalled the splendor of soft April skies.

The dream of old sweet love within thy face;
A largess of dreaming beauty in thy smile;
Thy every motion timed with rhythmic grace,
Thy lips a red rose free from any guile.

Fain would I go with thee everywhere;
Tripping so lightly through the woodland green;
A wreath of violets on thy shining hair;
With all the daisies hailing thee their queen.

Fain would I love thee where the pebbled stream
Pours out its murmurs to the dappled wood;
Nor waken early from the golden dream
Where silver sunbeams fall so warm and good.

Where Pan's clear pipe with melody divine
Steals all the music of the Orphean lyre;
And fair Aurora pours the morn's new wine
Into a chalice wreathed with flaming fire.



TO THE PRESIDENT



Chief of the Nation,
Bearer of the people's light;
Swift to denounce the wrong
And to declare the right:
Cool in the crisis;
Clear-visioned, calm and true;
Champion of the many weak
Against the stronger few.

Thrice we salute thee;
From the sea-girt shores of Maine—
One people with one flag—
To where the Rio Grande pours its yellow stain,
From billowed sea to misty mountain crag.

Hail to thee, strong helmsman
Of the Nation's stately barque;
Clear-eyed, strong-handed still to steer
Past the red reefs. Truth is thine compass,
And we will not dread the dark.

Lord of the nations,
Keep him in the light.
Calm as he is, and fearing naught but Thee;
His sword two-edged,
His civic armor bright—
America's undaunted, white-plumed knight,
His shield the brightest sun of civic history.

NEW MOVE DAY



Big Chrismus ain' all de hollerday,
Us celebrate de Newmove Day—
Me an' Sis an' Lize an' Jule,
De hawg, de ox and de ole gray mule.

Dun made money nuff ter move;
An' Grandad's roomatiz do'n' prove;
Us des honin' fer de fust uv de y'u
Dere's er forchun waitin' fo' us sumwhu'!

De only trubble—hit's des erhead;
W'en we'se gittin' up hit's gwine ter bed;
But we gwiner git in de road an' stir
Wid der res' uv de niggers 'bout de fust uv de y'ur.

Yassur! yo' betcher us gwiner move,
Kase Gran'dad's health hit ain' improve;
An' Mur she sho' injoy bad health;
De Good Book sez dat health am wealth.



THE FIRST ROSE



Ah, rose of morn,
The sunlight in thy face,
Come to adorn
My garden with thy grace.

Thou art the smile
Of angels, bending low,
Here where erstwhile
Bloomed lilies of the snow.

Sweet rose, I fain
Would call thee springtime's mate—
Ah, me, how long had lain
The winter's sullen hate!

Blooming in beauty,
Where the violets peep
So shyly forth, thy duty
E'er the tryst of spring to keep.

RESURGAM



Softly the young, springing Dawn
Bathed from Golgotha's brow its purple mist:
A sigh of sorrow; silence deep, and tears.
Then all the pent-up passion in the voice of birds
 Burst forth again—
 A lyric of the morn:
 Full, strong and clear;
And through it all one low, sweet minor chord,
As if the end of all the days of grief
 Drew near.

And when the dusky east was tinged with roseate
 light,
Imprisoned Life stirred in his pallid sleep;
A heart of gold lay quivering with strange germant
 force
Within the White Lily's calyxed clasp,
E'en as the long-dormant voice of God
Unbound the morning's breath:
And Life went free,
His victory passing all the gates of Death.

TO THE EASTERN STAR



Bright star, a gleam amid the roseate East,
Thy beams like silver kiss the night good-bye;
Of all morn's jewels thine is not the least;
Thou art a diamond chiseled in the sky.

Thou art the earnest of the radiant day;
The promise of the paths of golden light;
The god of morn still owns thy magic sway;
Thy silvery beauty dims the queen of night.

Shaming the lily in thy stainless grace,
The poet's fancy and the painter's dream,
Methinks thou art an angel's smiling face,
With wondrous beauty in each mellow beam.

Methinks thou art the chalice of old love;
Ere time and change drove out the golden rays.
A torch of crystal splendor held above
To light the pathway of our dreaming gaze.



MAY MAGIC



Red bloomed the rose with Maytime's magic balm;
The mockbird's flute fell golden everywhere;
And all the winds were strangely sweet and calm,
Like angels whispering down a silvery stair.

Blue as the sea the dew-washed violet;
A lily's petals stainless as the snow;
A woodland cool and sparkling—shower-wet—
And rose-tipped arrows from the dawn's red bow.

May-time and music, and the ring-dove's call;
The feet of summer dancing on the hill;
Sparrows twittering 'long an ivied wall;
The plaintive echo of a whippoorwill.

Old gardens sweet with mint and eglantine;
A fisher-hawk at poise above a stream;
The twilight flowing like a cruse of wine;
And dusky shadows kindling into dream.

THE MOTHER



Lord thou didst take him on a winter's night,
When all thy world with stainless snow was white,
So like his life. (Oh, God, I loved him so,
I could not tell Thee I would let him go!)
So little, and he nestled in my breast;
He could not talk—but, ah! his eyes caressed.

So little, Lord, to leave me, who am strong,
I would have held his dimpled hands so long.
Ah, Lord, the nights ne'er seemed so dark and sad;
I raced with time—saw him a laughing lad;
He kissed my lips and murmured soft my name—
There in my dreams, when hope fed love's warm flame.

And now . . . he lies . . . a lily at my breast;
Oh, God, I cannot smile; I cannot rest.
I weep and watch till morn's gray lance breaks through,
And all the wood is wet with cold white dew.
Yet good and gentle hast Thou been to me—
Thine eyes have blessed me, Christ of Galilee.

Long, long ago, drawn by the magic charms,
The babes sought shelter in Thy pitying arms;
And Thou didst still the speech of caviling men
Who sought the place of greatest honor then,
Saying, "Verily, lest like one of these ye be,
Ye shall in no wise come to dwell with me."

Lord of the sunlight and the gentle rain,
Thou who canst read the language of a mother's pain,
Take my babe and kiss him ere he cry;
Tell him his mother's coming bye and bye;
I know that he will love Thee like the babes of old,
My little lamb, safe in the Father's fold.

Dear Lord if it were not for faith in Thee,
I e'en could wish to lie forever in the cold blue sea;
But something whispered, "He is still thine own,
Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone;
And thou shalt sing with him beside the crystal streams,
When heavenly light shall crown earth's long, long
dreams."

LULLABY



De souf win' sing ter de b'ud in the nes',
An' go ter sleep, honey, on you mammy's breas,
Mammy's li'l' coon dat she lub de bes'—

Um-um-um-umm whilst I shake,
Mammy's li'l' black snowflake.

De bumblebee fly ter de yaller bloom,
An' de wah guns gwine, boom-boom-boom!
But dey ain't agwiner trubble mammy's li'l' black coon—

Oom-oom—go ter sleep whilst I rock;
Mammy's gwiner gib yo er new red frock.

Lu-lu, honey, whilst I shake,
An' go ter sleep, mammy's li'l' black snowflake.

De crow fly low in de new cawn fiel'.
An' de mawkin bu'd dance ter he own glad reel,
But heah's a li'l' black b'ud dey ainer gwiner steal—

Oo-lulu-oo-lu-lu.

Go ter sleep, honey, on yo' mammy's breas',
Cuddle up dere an' take yo' res',
Mammy's li'l' black b'ud dat she lub de bes.

Loo-lo-lo-loo-lo-lo,
Mammy des lubs her li'l' 'un so!

A SPRIG OF SHAMROCK



Ach, 'tis but the auld flower iv Ireland
With a bit iv the sea in its grane;
But it brings back the mim'ry iv luv'd ones
Low in the cauld earth-mither lain—
Haroes who died fer the good Grane Isle,
From Reuilly clear to Champagne.

An' I mind me iv Nora, me darlin'
With eyes loike the sheen iv the stars;
Back yondher by the banks in Killarney—
(Ach, I wad die fer the damsel an' care
Divil-a-bit f'r the scars).
A loikely maid, I grant yez; an' she luvs me still far away;
An' I struggled with me tears an' me mim'ries
When I opened her letther today—

To see but a sprig iv the shamrock,
Plucked by the white hands iv the lass
From the far Grane Isle iv me childhood;
An' I see the swate years as they pass;
An' it's always Nora, me darlin'
A-sailin' in all of me ships;
An' I wuz the rogue to be stalin'
The rose iv a kiss from her lips.

Just a withered lafe iv the shamrock,
From the banks iv Killarney, me boy;
But the heart iv me bates to the music,
An' the feet iv me dance to the joy—
A token from the Rose iv Killarney
As I lie in the trenches tonight,
With the cauld red earth f'r me pillar
An' the sad white moon f'r me light.

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Douglass, John Jordan.

The bells /



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